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KCR cannot campaign for polls for 48 hours

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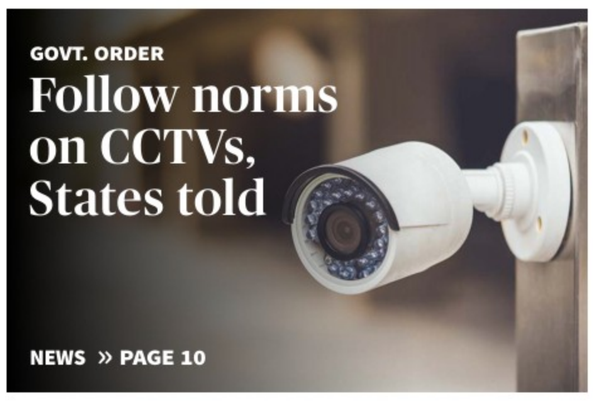

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Metro drivers told to slow down on curved stretches

BENGALURU
The BMRCL has asked metro drivers to slow down when approaching a curve in the metro line stretch for safety reasons. » Page 2

Hoteliers in city say no to annual price hike

BENGALURU
At a time when the price of all commodities and services are going up, hoteliers in Bengaluru have decided to forgo their annual price hike, which takes place in April.
» Page 3

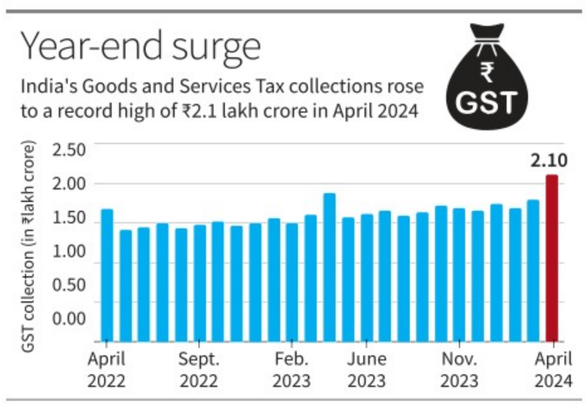
April's gross GST takings power past ₹2.1 lakh cr.

Record tax collections were due to strong momentum in the economy, says Finance Minister; April's GST revenues are usually the highest, as taxpayers meet compliance deadlines in March

Vikas Dhoot
NEW DELHI

Year-end compliances lifted India's gross Goods and Services Tax (GST) revenues past a record ₹2.1 lakh crore in April, reflecting a 12.4% growth over the previous highest tally of ₹1.87 lakh crore in the same month last year. Taking refunds into account, GST revenues for the month were at ₹1.92 lakh crore, 15.5% higher than the collection in April 2023.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman attributed the ₹2 lakh crore-plus GST revenues in April to "the strong momentum in the economy and efficient tax collections", and said there were no dues pending on account of IGST (Integrated GST) settlement to the States.



Revenues from domestic transactions grew 13.4%, the Finance Ministry said, while goods imports yielded an 8.3% uptick, helping GST inflows "breach the landmark milestone of ₹2 lakh crore". This marks a rebound in revenues from goods imports that had contracted 5% in March, while domestic transactions' growth weakened in April relative to the 17.6% uptick recorded in the previous month. Overall, gross GST revenues grew at a slower pace of 11.5% in March, while net revenues had risen 18.4%, faster than April's growth.

April's GST revenues, for transactions in March, are typically the highest in a year as taxpayers square their books for the financial year and remit any pending dues to meet compliance deadlines.

Following last month's record spike, experts project revenues to moderate in coming months, with some growth expected over the ₹1.68 lakh crore monthly average GST collection of 2023-24.

GST compensation cess collections also hit an all-time high of ₹13,260 crore last month, which included ₹1,008 crore collected on imported goods. The cess is levied on select goods such as automobiles and tobacco products, over and above the peak GST rate of 28%.

CONTINUED ON
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SC rejects plea for allocating spectrum without auction

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

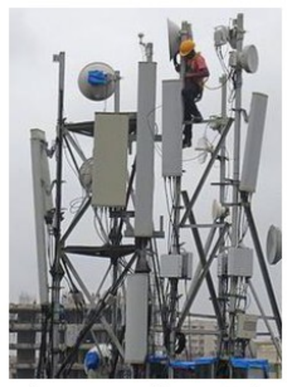
The Supreme Court has declined to receive an application by the Centre to allow the administrative allocation of spectrum.

The Registrar found the application for clarification misconceived. Spectrum, a scarce natural resource, is allocated to private players only through open, transparent auction.

The law was laid down on this issue by the Supreme Court 12 years ago in the 2G spectrum judgment.

'Administrative allocation' of spectrum would have government in sole charge of selecting operators to distribute airwaves, considered a scarce resource.

The Registrar invoked Order XV Rule 5 of the Supreme Court Rules, 2013 to decline the application.



'Administrative allocation' of spectrum will put Centre in sole charge of selecting operators to distribute airwaves.

Under this provision of the 2013 Rules, the Registrar may refuse to receive a petition on the ground that it discloses no reasonable cause or is frivolous or contains scandalous matter.

The government has 15 days to appeal to the court.

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We restored industry's confidence, says Shinde

Nistula Hebbar
MUMBAI

The two-year-old *Mahayuti* government in Maharashtra has done much to restore industry confidence in the commercial city of Mumbai, Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde said on Wednesday.

The record of the NDA governments at the State and the Centre would be enough for Prime Minister Narendra Modi to secure a third term, Mr. Shinde told *The Hindu*.

He blamed the previous MVA government for industry getting spooked, especially after a bomb was found outside industrialist Mukesh Ambani's residence three years ago.

INTERVIEW
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Telangana Chief Minister denies role in doctored video

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy's lawyer appeared before the Delhi Police on Wednesday and said the Congress leader had no role in creating or posting the doctored video of Home Minister Amit Shah's speech.

Mr. Reddy, who was summoned by the police for allegedly posting the video on social media platform X, hit out at the BJP at a rally in Telangana, accusing Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Mr. Shah of adopting a vengeful attitude towards him for questioning the BJP over its stand on reservation.

Police sources said they are close to identifying the creator of the deepfake video but before detaining the suspect they have to verify who uploaded or forwarded it.

Five more summoned

Notices have also been served on five others from various Opposition parties for allegedly sharing the video.

Jharkhand Congress chief Rajesh Thakur has also been summoned by the Delhi Police on May 2 in connection with the probe, a party spokesperson said on Wednesday.

"I received the notice from Delhi Police on Tuesday. But, it is beyond my understanding why the notice was served on me. This is nothing but anarchy," Mr. Thakur said.

Mr. Reddy's lawyer appeared before the Delhi Police after summonses were issued to Mr. Reddy, who is also the Telangana Congress chief, and four members of the Pradesh Congress Committee for allegedly posting the video on X.

"The police are still awaiting the response from those who were summoned today. A dozen more people are expected to appear in the coming days. Some people from Uttar Pradesh are expected to be questioned on Thursday," said another police source.

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'GUJARAT HEGEMONY'
» PAGE 7

Prajwal seeks seven days to appear before SIT

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Hassan JD(S) MP Prajwal Revanna, who is facing a probe by the Special Investigation Team (SIT) for the alleged sex scandal involving him, on Wednesday sought seven more days to appear before the agency. The day also saw Chief Minister Siddaramaiah writing to Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeking his intervention to "ensure the swift return of the absconding Member of Parliament to face the full force of the law".

Mr. Siddaramaiah has asked Mr. Modi to cancel the diplomatic passport of Mr. Prajwal, who has "fled the country", "sensing the impending nature of police case and arrest" in the "serious case of alleged sexual exploitation of innumerable women".

Congress leader Supriya Shrinate (right) shows photos of Prajwal Revanna, at a press conference in Bengaluru on Wednesday. PTI

When and how he left

Mr. Prajwal Revanna booked a ticket on a Lufthansa flight from Bengaluru to Germany on April 26, when Hassan went to polls where he is contesting as a BJP-JD(S) National Democratic Alliance candidate in the Lok Sabha election. He flew out of the country at 2 a.m. on April 27 using his diplomatic passport, and he has a return ticket to Bengaluru booked for May 15, sources said. He is presently believed to be in Germany.

Mr. Prajwal Revanna was served a notice on Tuesday to present himself for questioning within 24 hours, which he did not on Wednesday. In a first response since the alleged scandal broke, Mr. Prajwal Revanna posted on his social media accounts on Wednesday afternoon, "I am not in Bengaluru to attend the inquiry. I have communicated to the CID Bengaluru through my advocate. Truth will prevail soon," he posted. A person claiming to be his advocate has filed a response with the SIT that his client is abroad and needs seven days' time to appear before the agency for questioning.

Meanwhile, H.D. Revanna, also accused in the case filed by a former maid in their household, is supposed to present himself for questioning before the SIT on Thursday. However, sources said the advocate's response was not authorised and would not stand.

Diplomatic passport

Meanwhile, Mr. Siddaramaiah said it's learnt that Mr. Prajwal Revanna is travelling abroad on his diplomatic passport. Mr. Siddaramaiah has urged Mr. Modi to "move the Ministries of External Affairs and Home Affairs to take swift action to cancel the diplomatic passport of Mr. Prajwal Revanna and to take such other steps using diplomatic and police channels of the Government of India as well as international police agencies to ensure the swift return of the absconding Member of Parliament to face the full force of law."

BLAME GAME
» PAGE 4

Police storm Columbia University again; over 100 anti-war student protesters held

Anisha Dutta
NEW YORK

A dramatic scene unfolded at Columbia University in the U.S. late on Tuesday as the New York Police Department (NYPD) brought in a military grade vehicle with an extendable ramp to gain entry to a window of Hamilton Hall, the campus building occupied by anti-war student protesters.

Dozens of NYPD officers in riot gear swarmed Columbia University around 9.30 p.m. and encircled key areas of the campus including the 'Gaza Solidarity Encampment' and Hamilton Hall that had been occupied by protesters. Around midnight, the entire encampment had been cleared out by the NYPD.

Student activists appeal to New York police officers on the Columbia University campus on Tuesday. AP

Additional crowds of officers entered campus on foot through the main gate. According to the police, flash bangs were used to disorient the protesters as officers made their way inside Hamilton Hall. The officers blocked media and student journalists from entering the premises of Hamilton Hall while putting the entire campus on a lockdown till the area was cleared. The NYPD also threatened those inside Pulitzer Hall, where Columbia's Journalism School resides, including the Dean, Jelani Cobb, to remain inside till "the area was cleared". The building was inhabited by faculty and student journalists covering the events.

According to the police, at least 109 people were taken into custody on Tuesday night from Columbia University, and three encampments dismantled. At least two New York City Department of Correction buses full of protesters were seen being driven away from the school.

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Mango-picking tourism cancelled in State amid low yield, elections

Darshan Devaiah B.P.
BENGALURU

Each year, hundreds of mango enthusiasts eagerly anticipate the mango-picking tourism event in Karnataka, where they explore mango farms across the State. However, this year's tour has been cancelled due to a significant reduction in mango production as well as the the model code of conduct that is in place for the Lok Sabha election.

There has been a significant reduction in mango production this year in Karnataka. BHAGYA PRAKASH K.

For the past few years, the Karnataka State Mango Development and Marketing Corporation Limited (KSMDMCL) has been organising mango-picking tourism, garnering a positive response, especially from children and senior citizens. The KSMDMCL collaborates with mango growers in the State to organise this farm visit. During the tour, visitors receive first-hand information about mango cultivation, have the opportunity to pick the fruit, take a guided farm tour, indulge in fresh fruit tasting, savour local cuisines, and purchase mangoes at wholesale prices.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, KSMDMCL's managing director, C.G. Nagaraju, said, "Due to the constraints of the election model code of conduct, which prohibits large group gatherings, coupled with significantly reduced mango production this year, the farms are experiencing notably low yields. Hence mango-picking tourism cannot be done this year. However, in June, we will reassess the situation and consider organising the tour if there is sufficient interest from the people."

The mango farm tours, typically conducted during the mango season, were scheduled for Sundays.

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The importance of Kohli in the evolving T20 batting landscape

The former India skipper is a classical top-order bat who has often gone searching for intent when the demands of the shortest form of the game has merited a modern upgrade on a role where India does not lack options anymore

K.R. DEEPAK

Ayan Acharya

For the last three years, Virat Kohli's approach to T20 cricket has been in question, but now he finds himself in yet another World Cup squad. In fact, more than 50% of the players selected for the big-ticket event in the USA and the West Indies, including captain Rohit Sharma and Kohli, featured in India's 2022 T20 World Cup campaign.

India's approach to T20Is has historically mirrored its strategy in ODIs, prioritising wickets over boundaries. But there have been enough signs that that attitude is shifting, but at a glacial pace. Kohli, like Rohit, returned to the T20I squad after more than a year's absence ahead of the Afghanistan series at home in January this year.

India's 15 for the World Cup suggests that the team-management expects slow turners. So, there is a case to be made here for the decision to include Kohli, who, despite being doubted by many in this format, is a good fit for this current India group because the bowling make-up, which includes two in-form specialist spinners and a couple of left-arm spin-bowling all-rounders, is expected to be good at boundary-preventing. This allows India the luxury of carrying a T20 batter in the mould of Kohli.

That said, the top four – captain Rohit, Yashasvi Jaiswal, Kohli, and Suryakumar Yadav – were more or less decided even before the official squad announcement was made. The selectors and Rohit are taking a punt on Kohli's ability to perform under pressure.

Kohli has shown a strong temperament when it comes to big games. He respects his opponents but is not intimidated by them. This quality is especially important in high-pressure tournaments where nerves can get the best of players.

A great example of Kohli's composure came in the 2022 T20 World Cup chase against Pakistan at a packed MCG in Australia. Kohli's strike-rate was a jaw-dropping 278.57 at the death that night as he waltzed to 39 off 14 balls. At one point, though, Kohli was batting on 12 off 21 balls. Kohli's average in nine successful run chases at the T20 World Cup is a scarcely believable 518. He has seven fifties and has been dismissed only once.

India had earlier lacked the hitting depth of other T20I sides, making it difficult for the main batters to be ultra-aggressive upfront. Not only that, in the early 2000s, India's top five also contributed significantly with the ball. However, the current primary batters do not have the same level of contribution with the ball, which puts pressure on the team management to include a frontline spinner at number seven. Consequently, the team's tail becomes longer, and the top order has to be more careful and restrained in their approach.

But with the emergence of Rinku Singh, the flamboyance of Suryakumar, the evolution of Sanju Samson, and the reincarnation of Shivam Dube, that headache seems to have taken a back seat for now. It should alleviate some stress for Kohli. Yes, there is a strong argument that except the redoubtable Jasprit Bumrah, India's pace bowling looks a tad wobbly, which makes it doubly important for Rohit's men to win the boundary-percentage count. Kohli will be mindful of that too.

Kohli had recently shrugged off criticism of his strike rate against spin after scoring a match-winning 70 not out off 44 balls against the Gujarat Titans in Ahmedabad. "All the people who talk about strike rates and me not playing spin well are the ones who love talking about this stuff. But for me, it's just about winning the game for the team," Kohli said after the match. "And there's a reason why you do it for 15 years – because you've done this day in and day out; you've won games for your teams."

However, the criticism of Kohli's T20 game isn't completely unwarranted. He has high averages, and his strike rates tend to rise as the innings goes deeper. Kohli has an overall strike rate of a shade under 140 in T20Is at an average of over 53 over the last five years. For the Royal Challengers Bengaluru, he averages less than 40 (35.07) and strikes way slower at under 130 during the same timeline.

Looking at what Kohli has been doing in the PowerPlay and the overs after it clears up the picture further. For India, since 2019, Kohli has batted slowly at the start, going at 111.28, and then raised it to 128 between 7 and 16. But he gets stuck into the bowlers if he makes it to the last four, going over 213. In the IPL for the same timeline, Kohli's PowerPlay, middle-over, and death-over strike rates are: 129.69, 116.61, and 206.50.

In fact, Kohli's overall strike rate at No. 3 – where he normally bats for India in T20Is – in the last two years has hovered in the early 130s while the average strike rates for one down for teams like South Africa, Australia and West Indies are north of 150. The No. 3s of England, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, New Zealand, Pakistan and Afghanistan have a lower combined strike rate.

Kohli is scoring at a strike rate of 147 in this year's IPL. Only once has he ever scored quicker, and that was in 2016 (152.03), when he amassed 973 runs – the most by any player in an IPL season. Kohli scored his eighth IPL hundred against the Rajasthan Royals this year, with his 113 not out against the Royals being his joint-highest score in the T20 league. But he also took 67 balls to get there, making it the joint-slowest hundred in the IPL, along with Manish Pandey's century against the now-defunct Deccan Chargers in 2009.

Kohli's innings in Jaipur was a perfect microcosm of his T20 batting. His strike rate was 190 in the last 22 balls he faced. But for the first 25 balls, he struck at under 130, while for the next 25, he went at 156. It is evident by now that Kohli, the T20 batter, is at his destructive best when he is operating between overs 17 and 20.

However, Kohli has also seemed to embrace a less risk-averse approach to batting inside the first six overs in this IPL, looking to hit over the top to find the fence. "They probably want me to come hard at them so they can get me out or have an early breakthrough. But I feel like if I'm set and if I bat beyond six overs, then our chance of getting good totals becomes that much better," Kohli had said after his hundred against the Royals.

Kohli is a classical top-order bat who has often gone searching for intent when the demands of the T20 game merit a modern upgrade on a role where India does not lack options anymore. Kohli loves pace on the ball, which partly explains why he is so good in the death overs, a phase where opposition captains normally turn to their faster bowlers.

Kohli, of late, has been struggling to maintain his momentum outside the PowerPlay, especially against spin bowling, making him susceptible to retaining strike from more destructive players who are trained to excel in this phase. In effect, Kohli's ability to impact the game positively is hugely determined by whether he survives the PowerPlay as well as the middle overs, but that sometimes leaves the rest of his teammates more ground to cover.

That said, the volume of runs, even in T20 cricket, has not been a problem for Kohli. India would only hope that, come the T20 World Cup, he continues to score the same runs at a higher strike rate and more relevantly.

THE GIST

- Kohli's overall strike rate at No. 3 — where he normally bats for India in T20Is — in the last two years has hovered in the early 130s
- The ace Royal Challengers opener is scoring at a rate of 147 in this year's IPL
- The star batter's ability to impact the game positively is hugely determined by whether he survives the PowerPlay as well as the middle overs

Metro drivers told to slow down on curved stretches

BMRCL officials say the reduced speed of trains on the Purple Line is intentional and necessary for safety reasons; commuters, however, complain about increased travel time

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Namma Metro commuters have been complaining about the train slowing down on certain stretches, which has increased travel time. Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) has asked metro drivers to slow down when approaching a curve in the metro line stretch to be on the safe side.

BMRCL officials said the reduced speed of trains on the Purple Line stretch is intentional and necessary for safety reasons. According to BMRCL authorities, the presence of a curve along this particular stretch necessitates cautionary measures to ensure passenger safety and operational efficiency.

A senior BMRCL official explained, "The slower speed of trains on the Purple Line between Indiranagar and Trinity stations is due to the curvature of the track in that area. As a safety precaution, we have instructed metro pilots to operate at reduced speeds in sections with sharp curves to minimize the risk of accidents and ensure the safety of passengers."

According to BMRCL, the presence of a curve along this stretch necessitates cautionary measures

He said, "Safety is our top priority, and we are committed to providing a safe and efficient travel experience for all metro commuters. While we understand the inconvenience caused by the slower pace of trains, it is imperative to prioritise safety over speed."

But passengers have expressed frustration over the prolonged travel time. Ishiqa Chawla, a commuter, said, "I rely on the metro to commute to work every day, but lately, the journey has become tedious due to the slow movement of the trains on the Purple Line stretch. This happens only between Indiranagar and Trinity metro stations."

Earlier in 2023, BMRCL curtailed metro train services at Trinity metro station due to maintenance work. In 2018, metro services on the Purple Line were disrupted by a "honeycomb formation" or concrete distress in a beam above a pier near Trinity station.

Regarding Trinity metro station, a BMRCL official said as maintenance work and structural inspections are done once a year or once in two years, the train services will be curtailed in all the stretches.

Another regular passenger, Tara R., said, "We take the metro because we think it's the fastest mode of travel in the city. But the long wait time and now slower-moving train negate the advantages the metro offers over regular road travel. Instead of stop-gap arrangements, the BMRCL should look for more permanent solutions, even if it means halting operations for a few days."

BMRCL says it's imperative to prioritise safety over speed.

Civic work on R.T. Nagar main road hits businesses, motorists, and residents

Tenzin Yangkey
K. Sowmya
BENGALURU

The ongoing white-topping by the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) and drainage work undertaken by the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) have rendered the R.T. Nagar main road a muddy mess, causing inconvenience to residents, businesses, and commuters.

White-topping work started roughly six months ago, and is expected to be completed by September 30.

B.S. Prahlad, Chief Engineer, BBMP, said, "The main road, which is currently an asphalt road, is being converted into a white-top concrete road. This is taking time. White-topped roads can last for the next 30 years. Hence, the nearby water drain and the footpaths are being remodelled. Further, certain utilities that were in the middle are being shifted to the side. All of this work will take some time."

The ongoing civic work at R.T. Nagar in Bengaluru. SUDHAKARA JAIN

Eateries, clothing shops, stationery shops, and hardware shops have reported a business decline of up to 50% due to the construction work.

"Our customers have decreased by 50% since the construction began. Since the roads are being dug up on both sides, there is very limited space available to park vehicles. The huge amount of dust pollution has made it very hard for us to attract clients," said Faruq Ahmed, a cashier at a restaurant. He added that various eateries around the area have shut down as their business has taken a massive hit due to the construction.

White-topping work started roughly six months ago, and is expected to be completed by September 30

Sabana Begum, a resident, said, "I have definitely reduced stopping by the restaurants around this area due to the dust and constant traffic".

Syed Saleem, the owner of a small hardware store on the main road, said, "The number of customers has drastically reduced since a good portion of the road has been occupied by construction material. The dust, paired with the lack of parking space, is becoming increasingly burdensome."

With the road dug up on both sides, mud piled up unevenly, and a web of unattended wires, the footpath has little space for pedestrians.

S. Ranvir, a student, said, "There is no space to stand while purchasing anything in the roadside stalls."

The congestion on the road has been exacerbated by the ongoing work, especially with many BMTC buses frequently moving on the road. Traffic often comes to a standstill for a few minutes when two buses move on the road in opposite directions. Sumaya, a resident who travels along the road every day to get to work, said, "It takes me an hour to make it from one end of the road to the other when it only took me 20 minutes earlier. Big vehicles make it tedious for people driving two-wheelers like myself. They make the roads extremely dusty and harder to navigate."

M.N. Anucheth, Joint Commissioner (Traffic), Bengaluru, said, "Due to water-logging, BWSSB has also been building a strong water drainage system for the last month. Since the width of the road has decreased, the road has become congested, affecting movement of vehicles."

KIA weather station records maximum of 39.2 degrees C

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The India Meteorological Department's (IMD) Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) station recorded a maximum temperature of 39.2° C on Wednesday. This equals the highest temperature ever recorded in Bengaluru. The highest temperature recorded by the Bengaluru city station was 39.2° C on April 25, 2016. The highest-ever temperature recorded by the Bengaluru city station for May is 38.9° C, recorded in 1931.

On Monday (April 29), the Bengaluru city station recorded a maximum temperature of 38.1° C and a minimum temperature of 24.8° C. KIA recorded a maximum temperature of 39.2° C and a minimum temperature of 23.5° C and the HAL station recorded a maximum of 37.6° C and a minimum of 23.8° C.

The IMD forecast for the next 36 hours shows a mainly clear sky, and the maximum and minimum temperatures are very likely to be around 39° C and 24° C, respectively.

Student arrested for trying to open emergency door of flight

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Bengaluru international airport police arrested a 22-year-old student on Wednesday on the charge of trying to open the emergency exit door of the domestic flight he was travelling in.

The accused, Karthik Karan, is a native of Kolkata. He is in the first year of an MCA course.

First-time traveller

He is a first-time air traveller and had come to Bengaluru on an Indigo flight to meet his friend during his vacation. The cabin crew noticed Karan trying to open the emergency exit door and stopped him before lodging a complaint against him terming him an unruly passenger.

He was handed over to security personnel after the flight landed at Kempegowda International Airport in Bengaluru.

Other passengers travelling with him panicked for some time before the cabin crew took all the precautionary measures to ensure safety of the aircraft.

Based on a complaint by Mohammed Umar, assistant manager of Indigo, the police arrested Karan charging him under Section 336 (rash or negligence as to endanger human life or the personal safety of others) of the Indian Penal Code. The accused was questioned by the police, who recorded his statement before he was released on station bail.

Karan, in his statement, claimed that he did not try to open the door.

He held on to the handle of the emergency exit door to get up and to get out of the aircraft, according to the police.

PUBLIC NOTICE

My client M/s. RRL BUILDERS AND DEVELOPERS PVT. LIMITED. Rep. by its Managing Director, Mr. Ram. R, S/o Mr. C. Raja Reddy to Develop the schedule property mentioned hereunder in to residential apartment Project. Accordingly has entered into a Joint Development Agreement dated 21-03-2023 with its sole owner Sri. B. V. BALARAJU, S/o Late Venkataramanappa, residing at # 12, Billapura Village, Sarjapura Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore Urban District-562125 & The schedule property is mortgaged to Aditya Birla Housing Finance.

If any persons, banks, financial institutions etc., having any claims, right, title and interest whatsoever over the schedule property may forward their objections to the undersigned in writing with supporting documents of your such claims, within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice. Failing which it will be deemed that there are no claims, right, title and interest by anybody and my client will proceed further to achieve its above intention and thereafter no claims will be considered.

SCHEDULE

Residential converted land bearing old Sy. No. 10/1, New Sy. No. 10/5 measuring 0-21 Guntas and land in Sy. No. 10/2 measuring 1 Acre, in all measuring 1 Acre 21 Guntas (conversion order No. ALN (A.S.H.) SR: 252/2015-16 dated on 19-06-2019, issued by the Deputy Commissioner, Bangalore District. situated at Billapura Village, Sarjapura Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore Urban District and bounded on:
East by : Land of Sri. B. V. Ramanna,
West by : Land of Sri. Balaganeshappa,
North by : Private property
South by : Handenahalli Road.

MANJUNATHA & ASSOCIATES
K. N. MANJUNATHA CHARY, ROOPA. B, & B.N. JAGADISH KUMAR, Advocates, # 96, 1st Floor, 1st Main, 4th Cross, Maruthi Nagar, Madiwala, Bangalore- 68, Mob: 9845965626, 7406090832
Bangalore, Date : 02-05-2024

PUBLIC NOTICE

Our Client is desirous of purchasing the properties described in the Serial Nos. 1 to 5 of the Schedule written hereunder and hereinafter referred to as "THE SCHEDULE PROPERTIES" measuring about 16 acres and 17 Guntas and 15 Guntas Kharab, and we are undertaking a title scrutiny thereof. The following persons have represented to our Client that they are the owners, in the manner stated below:

No. 1. Survey No. 123/1, ZERASP SIASP KOTHAVALA S/O SIASP KOTHAVALA, 00 Acre 39 Guntas.
No. 2. Survey No. 128, ZERASP SIASP KOTHAVALA S/O SIASP KOTHAVALA, 00 Acre 36.00 Guntas (Out of 01 Acre 10 Guntas) (converted land).
No. 3. Survey No. 129, ZERASP SIASP KOTHAVALA S/O SIASP KOTHAVALA, 05 Acre 30 Guntas and 06 Guntas Kharab.
No. 4. Survey No. 130, ZERASP SIASP KOTHAVALA S/O SIASP KOTHAVALA, 05 Acre 10 Guntas and 05 Guntas Kharab.
No. 5. Survey No. 136, ZERASP SIASP KOTHAVALA S/O SIASP KOTHAVALA, 03 Acre 22 Guntas and 04 Guntas Kharab.

Any person/s asserting any right/s, interest, title or claim/s in respect of the Schedule Properties or any part/s thereof has any objection/s to such sale in favour of our Client, is hereby called upon to notify the undersigned in writing, within 10 days from the date of issuance of this Public Notice, along with documentary proof. If no such written objections/claims are received by the undersigned within the aforesaid period, our Client shall proceed on the basis that there are no claim/s and/or objection/s, whatsoever, with regard to Schedule Properties and will conclude the sale transaction, without entertaining any future claims.

SCHEDULE

1. All that piece & parcel of agricultural land bearing Survey No.123/1 measuring 00 Acre 39 Gunta, situated at Shettarahalli Village, Kasaba Hobli, Devanahalli Taluk, Bangalore Rural District, bounded on
East by : land bearing Survey No.124.
West by : land bearing Survey No.130.
North by : land bearing Survey No.128.
South by : land bearing Survey No.123/2.
2. All that piece & parcel of Undeveloped Converted land bearing Survey No.128 measuring 00 Acre 36.00 Guntas (Out of 01 Acre 10 Guntas), conversion for Ware-House & Cold-Storage vide order No.ALN(D)SR/68/10-11, dated 30.12.2010 issued by the Deputy Commissioner Bangalore Rural District, situated at Shettarahalli Village, Kasaba Hobli, Devanahalli Taluk, Bangalore Rural District, bounded on
East by : land bearing Survey No.125.
West by : land bearing Survey No.129.
North by : land bearing Survey No.126, 127.
South by : land bearing Survey No.123, 124.
3. All that piece & parcel of agricultural land bearing No.129 measuring 05 Acre 30 Guntas and 06 Guntas Kharab situated at Shettarahalli Village, Kasaba Hobli, Devanahalli Taluk, Bangalore Rural District, bounded on
East by : land bearing Survey No.127 & 128.
West by : land bearing Survey No.131 & 132.
North by : land bearing Survey No.136.
South by : land bearing Survey No.130.
4. All that piece & parcel of agricultural land bearing Survey No.130 measuring 05 Acre 10 Guntas and 05 Guntas Kharab, situated at Shettarahalli Village, Kasaba Hobli, Devanahalli Taluk, Bangalore Rural District, bounded on
East by : land bearing Survey No.121,122 & 123.
West by : land bearing Survey No.131.
North by : land bearing Survey No.129.
South by : Bomanwada Village Boundary.
5. All that piece & parcel of agricultural land bearing Survey No.136 measuring 03 Acre 22 Guntas and 04 Guntas Kharab, situated at Shettarahalli Village, Kasaba Hobli, Devanahalli Taluk, Bangalore Rural District, bounded on
East by : land bearing Survey No.137 & Lake.
West by : land bearing Survey No.135.
North by : Lakshmipura Village Boundary.
South by : land bearing Survey No.129.

M/s. Sundaraswamy & Ramdas Advocates, No. 24, Keshava Nivas, Kalidasa Road, Gandhinagar, Bangalore – 560 009. Ph: 22263838, 22380809
Email:admin@sundaraswamy.com

PUBLIC NOTICE

The general/public at large are hereby notified that, my client **Sri. Selvam.T** S/o Thangaraj, Residing at No.18, 1st Floor, 5th Cross, Nagarabhavi Main Road, Shivanandanagar, Moodalapalya, Bangalore– 560072, intends to purchase the Schedule property from its owner **Sri.Manappa Gangappa Pattar** S/o Gangappa Beemappa Pattar, Residing at Kadivala Kallapura Village, Hunagund Taluk, Bagalakot District. Any Person/s institution / authority having any objection and bar or claim, rights, title or interest in the Schedule property may lodge his/her/their/its objection or claim with the undersigned along with supporting documentary evidence within **10 days** from the date of the publication of this public notice. If no objections and/or claims are received within the stipulated period my clients would proceed to purchase the Schedule Property.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of the **vacant site bearing No.46, House list No.3388, Khata No.3003, BBMP ward No.38, present BBMP ward No.127, assessment No.109, situated at Nagarabhavi Village, Yeshwanthpura Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk, measuring on East to West 47 + 32/2 feet, North to South 58 feet, in all measuring 2291 sq.feet, and bounded on;**
East by : Site No.47, West by : Assessment No.109 portion property, North by : Site No.63A, South by : Road.

RAVISHANKAR
ADVOCATE,
No.42/1, Appu Rao Road,
Chamarajpet, Bangalore -560018

CLARIFICATION OF NAME

I, Geetha Mallikarjun @ Geetha M.C. W/o Mallikarjunaiah R/@ Near Sarvodaya Co-operative Society, Mysuru Road, Kanakapura Town, Kanakapura Taluk, Ramanagara District do hereby solemnly state that, prior to my marriage my name was GEETHA M.C. and this reflects in all my academic documents. After my marriage my name was changed to GEETHA MALLIKARJUN and I have obtained Aadhaar Card (No.7514 8650 0075) and Pan Card (No.DAWPG2600B) in this name. I further state that both names refers to me only. I further state that in future I will use **GEETHA MALLIKARJUN** for all business vide affidavit dated 30.04.2024 sworn to Notary Ramachandra.

CLASSIFIEDS MART

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BWSSB extends deadline for installation of aerators

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) has extended the deadline to install aerators and flow restrictors for taps in commercial establishments to May 7. The water board extended it due to public demand.

"We already have more than six lakh aerators installed in the city. Malls, commercial establishments, government offices, hotels, restaurants, apartments, and religious places should all install aerators by May 7. I have instructed officials to act against those who have not installed aerators and penalise from May 8," said Ram Prasath Manohar, Chairman, BWSSB, on Wednesday.

Health checkup

BWSSB has organised a free health checkup for its workers, including watermen, sanitary workers, drivers and staff members during May.

Biker killed in road accident

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A 30-year-old motorcycle rider was killed, and his friend sustained injuries in an accident on Lavelle Road on Thursday.

The deceased, Sourav Ban, working in an apparel shop on Lavelle Road, had gone out with friends for a tea break when the accident occurred. According to the police, he lost control of the vehicle, and the two slipped and fell off the bike.

While Ban was killed on the spot, the pillion rider, identified as Roieston, 27, sustained injuries. He was rushed to a private hospital where he is being treated.

The traffic police have registered a case.

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH

SAD DEMISE

With a heavy heart we regret to inform the demise of

DR K.P. KRISHNAN,

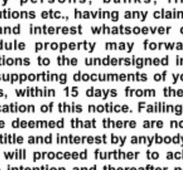
WHO ATTAINED THE LOTUS FEET OF RANGANATHA ON MAY 1ST 2024

Cremation at 2.00 PM on May 2nd (Today) at Kalpalli Electric Crematorium Bengaluru.

HEMA KRISHNAN AND FAMILY
98940 07757, 97419 09533, 98450 53061

DEATH

SHRI. S K Rajagopalan aged 96 yrs Rtd CTTI, S.Rly attained Vaiguntha Prapthi on 28/04/2024 at Singanallur, Coimbatore. Bereaved family. Sri SKL Narasimhan& Smt. Uma, Smt.Kausalya Kannan, Smt. Krishnaveni Vasudevan, Smt Nandhini & Sri.S Rajagopal (9384809458) , Sri.TL Venkatraman (9445955399) and his beloved grand children & great grand children.



M.Narayanan (Unni)
Aged 73 passed away on **29th April 2024.**
Mourned by wife Deepa, sister Indira, sons Rahul & Vishal, daughters in law Aditi, Gopika and Family & Friends.

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

THIRD ANNIVERSARY

G. NANDAGOPAL
26.12.1945 – 02.05.2021
By - Family members
98847 95879

PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, CHANDRA Arun Kumar, Aged about 34, at present r/at No.812, JR Garden, Marsur Gate, Chandapura, Anekal Road, Anekal Taluk, Bengaluru Urban District 562106, do hereby solemnly affirm and state that before my marriage my name was V.Chandra and after my marriage my name was changed to Chandra Arunkumar. The names V.Chandra and Chandra Arunkumar are one and the same and are my names only. Sworn to before Notary, Muniswamy, Bangalore, vide affidavit on 29.04.2024.

LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE COURT OF THE IV[th] ADDL.DIST. JUDGE : KURNOOL
MVOP. NO. 386/2021
A.Ravikumar & another ....PETITIONERS
-vs-
M.Vijaya Kumar & others ... RESPONDENTS
NOTICE TO THE 3[rd] RESPONDENT.

R.Srinivas S/o G.Rathnam Owner of Vehicle bearing No. TN 18AS 0882, R/o H.No. 768/65, 3rd Cross, 4th Main Road, Prakash Nagar Sriram puram of Bangalore Town .

Where the petitioners filed above MVOP for compensation for the Death of Anantha Rishi in Road accident and claimed Rs.5,00,000/- with interst @ 12% P.A from the date of Petition for Cost.

The respondent No:3 is hereby directed to Appear before the Court on 19-06-2024 at 10-30 AM and filed your objections, if any, other wise you will deemed set-exparte.

BY ORDER OF THE COURT

M.Y. RAMAIAH
ADVOCATE , KURNOOL. (A.P)
Cell: 93938 11055

Particles called quarks hold the key to the final fate of some stars

In neutron stars, the strength with which the core collapses fuses protons and electrons into neutrons. Neutron stars are extremely dense, creating immense pressure that could be forcing the neutrons into a new state of matter. An old open problem asks whether this state could be quark matter

Qudsia Gani

An artist's conception of the pulsating neutron star PSR B1257+12, with a planet orbiting it nearby. NASA

We know that all matter is composed of atoms, and atoms are made of protons and neutrons inside the nucleus and electrons outside. But unlike electrons, protons and neutrons are composite particles because they are further made up of quarks.

Quarks can't exist in isolation. They can only be found in groups of two or three, if not more. Such clumps of quarks are called hadrons. Protons and neutrons are common examples. Physicists have mostly studied quarks based on the behaviour of hadrons, and are also interested in how quarks clump together.

When quarks clump

Two recent findings revealed new insights on this count. One, published on February 20, reported that three-quark clumps are more likely to form than two-quark clumps when a particular type of quark is more densely surrounded by some other particles. According to the international team of researchers that conducted this study, the finding rejects "conventional particle-physics models in which the consolidation of quarks is independent of the particle environment".

Another study, published on March 15, reported observing clumps composed entirely of the heavier quarks. Protons and neutrons are clumps of lighter quarks and are thus more long-lived. Heavy-quark clumps are very short-lived and harder to study, requiring more sophisticated tools and computing power. Yet understanding them is important to complete our understanding of all quarks, and by extension how these elusive particles affect what we know about nuclear fusion and the fate of stars.

In fact, in the particular and unusual case of quark stars, understanding quarks could have a more direct impact.

The tension of every star

A star is a globe of matter that has found a way to strike a balance between two forces. The force of gravity – arising from the star's mass – encourages the star to collapse under its own weight and implode. The nuclear force, expressed in the explosive energy released by fusion reactions at its core, pushes the star to blow up and outwards. In a star, the two forces are equally matched and it shines in the sky.

But once a star runs out of material to fuse, nuclear fusion weakens and gravity starts to gain the upper hand. Eventually, the star will 'die' and implode. Its fate in its afterlife depends on how large and massive it was when it lived, as a result forming a white dwarf, a neutron star or a black hole.

Scientists have estimated that if the Sun were 20-times more massive, it may collapse into a black hole when it dies. If it were only eight-times heavier, it could become a neutron star. But could there be stars that are too heavy to form a neutron star yet not too heavy to form a black hole, and thus form a quark star?

Enter 'quark matter'

In neutron stars, the strength with which the core collapses will fuse all protons and electrons inside into neutrons, thus its name. Physicists understand neutron stars well – on paper. The problem is they can't run any direct experiments on them in any laboratory on the earth. They also don't know either the masses or the radii of most neutron stars in the universe. So astrophysicists are very interested in studying them.

The matter inside neutron stars is extremely dense. For example, two Suns' worth of mass is packed into a sphere only 25 km wide. This creates an immense pressure that could be forcing the neutrons into a new state of matter.

An old open problem in physics asks whether this state could be quark matter – when there are no longer any neutrons, only quarks.

In December 2023, researchers from the University of Helsinki reported in the journal *Nature Communications* that the insides of most massive neutron stars have an 80-90% chance of being made of quark matter.

The research team combined astrophysical observations with theoretical *ab initio* (from scratch) calculations to develop a model that they ran using a supercomputer, and arrived at this result. However, these astrophysical observations were small in number, meaning the result is not so reliable. Astrophysicists need more observational data to understand quark matter and how exactly it forms.

The need for quarks

A popular way of calculating the bulk properties of any material is to use an equation of state – an equation that, when solved with data about some of a material's physical properties, reveals the values of other properties. For neutron stars, this is the Tolman-Oppenheimer-Volkoff equation: it is very complex but it assigns a probability to the presence of quarks within neutron stars.

> Once a star runs out of material to fuse, nuclear fusion weakens and gravity gains the upper hand. Eventually, the star will implode. Its fate in its afterlife will depend on how large and massive it was when it lived

Physics has a rich tradition of giving quirky names to things physicists find. For example, quarks come in six 'flavours' – three are called charm and strange; quarks themselves have a property called colour charge; and so on. The name 'quark' itself is courtesy physicist Murray Gell-Mann, who named these particles after a line in James Joyce's 1939 masterpiece, *Finnegan's Wake*.

Protons are positively charged and therefore have a magnetic moment (a turning force exerted by a magnetic field) associated with them. But neutrons have a magnetic moment, too, yet they are neutrally charged. So physicists in the 1960s figured neutrons must be made of smaller particles that gave rise to the magnetic moment but whose electric charges cancel themselves out. Gell-Mann called them quarks and their existence was confirmed in the 1970s.

Setting quarks free

There are six types of quarks: up, down, top, bottom, strange, and charm. Each quark can have one of three types of colour charge. Then there are also antiquarks, their antimatter versions. A quark-antiquark clump is called a meson (they don't annihilate each other because they are of different types, e.g. up + anti-down). Three-quark clumps are called baryons and they form the normal matter surrounding us.

Quarks are further held together by another set of particles called gluons. Because nuclear forces are very strong, quarks are always tightly bound to each other and are not free, even in the vacuum of empty space.

The nuclear force that holds quarks together is explained by a theory called quantum chromodynamics. It predicts that at sufficiently high (by all means extreme) energies, nuclear matter can become 'deconfined' to create a new phase of matter in which quarks don't have to exist in clumps.

Physicists have been able to obtain evidence of deconfinement by smashing lead ions against each other at very high energies in machines like the Large Hadron Collider. In these experiments, a state of matter called a quark-gluon plasma exists for a brief moment; the 'plasma' means the quarks are independent. According to the Big Bang theory, the universe was filled with this plasma before the particles clumped and formed the first blobs of matter.

This clumping process may release energy or modify its surroundings in a way that astrophysicists can look for, and eventually discover a quark star. Until then, the possibility will live on as one of the many open problems of physics.

(Qudsia Gani is an assistant professor in the Department of Physics, Government Degree College Pattan, Baramulla.)

A a public art installation outside a United Nations conference on plastics, in Ottawa, Ontario. AP

Plastic treaty talks conclude in Ottawa with little progress

Jacob Koshy

Activist and environmentalist groups have termed the Global Plastics Treaty negotiations that concluded in Ottawa, Canada, on Tuesday as "disappointing". Nearly 192 member countries deliberated for nearly a week to iron out a legally binding agreement to "end plastic pollution". This was the fourth round of talks since countries resolved in 2022 to eliminate plastics and formed an Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC), which consisted of government representatives tasked with drawing up a timeline for countries to not only eliminate plastic use but also halt production.

However the close connection between plastics and the oil economies of prominent countries, the vast manufacturing businesses that revolve around making and supplying different grades of plastics, the near ubiquity of the polymer's use in a variety of applications and the paucity of affordable, equivalent alternatives constitute the biggest roadblocks to its elimination. Because plastics do not easily degrade organically, they pollute marine and terrestrial ecosystems and have been long characterised as among the toughest environmental contaminants.

"The INC has once again failed to ask the most fundamental question to the success of the future treaty: how do we tackle the unsustainable production of plastics?" said Jacob Kean-Hammerson, Environmental Investigation Agency, United Kingdom and who was present at the talks.

The fourth round of talks was expected to deliver a timeline whereby primary plastic production was to halt. This didn't happen, though countries agreed to move forward with and come up with more detailed assessments of emissions,

The close connection between plastics and the oil economies of prominent countries constitutes the biggest roadblock to its elimination

production, product design, waste management, problematic and avoidable plastics, financing, and a just transition.

"We came to Ottawa to advance the text and with the hope that members would agree on the inter-sessional work required to make even greater progress ahead of INC-5. We leave Ottawa having achieved both goals and a clear path to landing an ambitious deal in Busan ahead of us," said Inger Andersen, Executive Director of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP). "The work, however, is far from over. The plastic pollution crisis continues to engulf the world and we have just a few months left before the end of year deadline agreed upon in 2022," she noted.

Inter-sessional work is expert meetings that take place between the official INC sessions and expected to catalyse agreement on key issues. The next meeting, expected to be the final one , is scheduled for November 2024 in Busan, South Korea.

"India opposed restrictions on producing so called primary plastic polymers or virgin plastics, arguing that production reductions exceed the scope of UNEA [United Nations Environment Assembly] resolutions. While acknowledging the chemicals used in plastic manufacturing, India highlighted that some are already subject to prohibition or regulation.

THE SCIENCE QUIZ

The travails of going to space

Vasudevan Mukunth

Please send in your answers to science@thehindu.co.in

QUESTION 1

Name the imaginary line in the earth's atmosphere, 100 km up from sea level, beyond which the United Nations holds that any human activity would be astronautic, not aeronautic. This line was first defined by the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale.

QUESTION 2

At a little over 19 km above the ground, the pressure on the human body drops to a value that's equal to the vapour pressure of water at the body's temperature (around 37 degrees C). As a result, any water exposed to the environment at this altitude -- like tears and saliva -- will boil away. This is why astronauts require pressurised suits. Name the line demarcating this altitude.

QUESTION 3

Following on from Q2: while water can boil away at this altitude, fluids inside the body don't because the tissue and skin can withstand the pressure difference. Nonetheless, bubbles of water vapour accumulate in the fluids. What is this phenomenon called?

QUESTION 4

For every month spent in space, space medicine research has found that astronauts lose around 1% of their ____ mass. This loss is very difficult to regain. Astronauts who spend a long time in space are thus required to take supplements like vitamin D once they return. Fill in the blank.

QUESTION 5

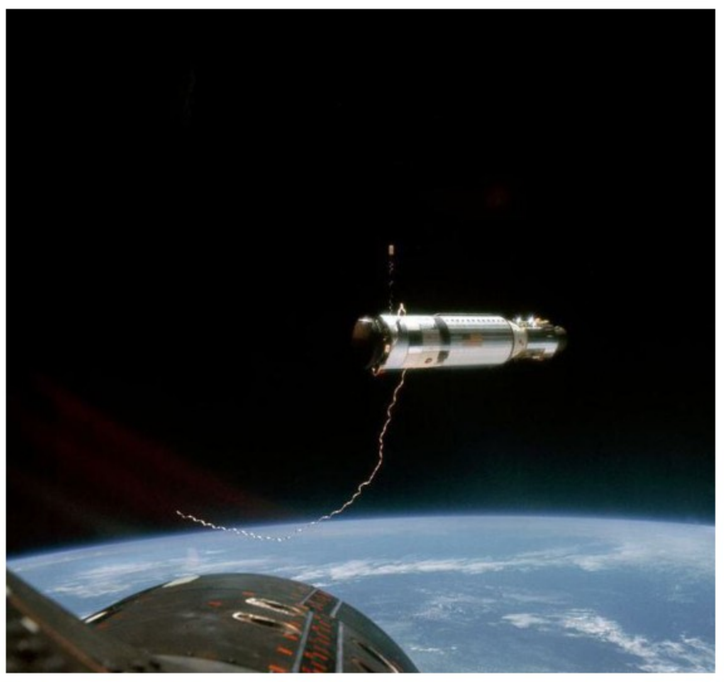
Many travellers experience space adaptation syndrome when they go to space for the first time. The syndrome is characterised by motion that the traveller sees but can't feel. What is this syndrome called when it happens on the ground?

Answers to April 30 quiz:

1. Substances that cause plants' leaves to fall off – **Ans: Defoliant**
2. Most infamous example of a defoliant in the Vietnam War – **Ans: Agent Orange**
3. Toxin present in defoliant used by the British in Malayan Emergency – **Ans: Dioxins**
4. Hardy plants that required a special mixture to be destroyed – **Ans: Rice**
5. Substance whose effects were depicted in photo by Nick Ut – **Ans: Napalm**

Visual: **Olof Palme**

First contact: P.N. Moorthy | ViswanadhaRao Batchu | K.N. Viswanathan | Brahanya Sankar | Shiva Nigam



Visual: Name this NASA spacecraft that, in 1966, managed to create a small amount of artificial gravity by rotating a capsule. NASA.

For feedback and suggestions
for 'Science', please write to **science@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Daily page'

Hoteliers say no to annual price hike to retain business

Owners, however, admit that their profits will take a hit without the increase in rates this year

Jahnavi T.R.
BENGALURU

Last year, the price of various items increased by 5%-10% in most hotels in the city. FILE PHOTO

At a time when the price of all commodities and services are going up, hoteliers in Bengaluru have decided to offer some respite to their customers, as the Bruhat Bengaluru Hoteliers Association (BBHA) has decided to forgo their annual price hike, which takes place in April.

Even as the prices of essentials like vegetables, grains, and pulses have gone up in recent months, hoteliers have refrained from hiking prices to retain business. Last year, the price of various items increased by 5%-10% in most hotels in the city. However, this year, hoteliers said business was badly affected in summer, especially in April, due to the heat outside.

"We did not increase the prices this time as it would be bad for business. The business has already come down in the last few months because of various reasons, and now, if we hike the prices, we will lose more customers. Besides, Bengaluru is a city where you can get the same item for different prices. So, most restaurants have already fixed prices according to their expenditure," said P.C. Rao, president, BBHA.

He also mentioned that with the price of one commodity falling by the time the other goes up, the hoteliers can manage with existing prices.

"For now, some vegetables and coffee powder have become expensive. But at the same time, the price of vegetables which had previously skyrocketed, like tomatoes and onions, has come down."

The hotel owners, however, do not deny the fact that their profits will take a hit without the hike this year.

"The average expenditure has gone up by 15% - 20% when compared to last year. Vegetables like chilli and garlic have gotten very expensive and so has labour. As it is hot outside, the electricity bills in air-conditioned restaurants have gone up like anything as customers prefer AC running at all times. The overhead expenses have gone up, but business has come down," said Deepak Shreyas, owner, Adithya Hotel, Mahalakshmipuram.

He added, "We have taken a dip in our profit margin, but we cannot increase the prices as we must consider the affordability of customers. Instead, we are ensuring to avoid wastage of food, water and other resources. We are also tightly monitoring our purchases."

While the prices will not be hiked anytime soon, they might come a little later in the year once the weather stabilises. The hoteliers hope that once the monsoon sets in, many of their overhead expenses and the prices of vegetables will come down, and by then, they can objectively decide about the price hike. "We need to increase it from time to time to sustain the business," Mr. Shreyas said.

While most hotels say they have not compromised with the quality or quantity of the food, some customers have reportedly noticed a decrease in quantity.

"I have been a regular consumer of a hotel near my house for over two years now. They have not changed their prices in over a year, but the quantity of servings has reduced slightly," said Nikhil. S, a resident of Peenya.

New social media trend raises concerns among cybercrime police

Shreyas H.S.
BENGALURU

Popular social media platforms are now awash with reels of people asking audiences to contribute ₹1 to ₹5 to buy high-end sports bikes. These posts also display a QR code asking people to make payments, claiming the account holder is in penury.

A social media account that goes by the name NimmaBike posted a reel with text in Kannada that read, "Day-7, I am a poor man without a father. I need funds to buy a bike, and please donate ₹ 1. I need money; please help." The post was seen by more than 1 million users and liked by 21,500 netizens.

Another account, DinaGt650, has posted multiple posts saying he wants to buy a GT-650 bike and will continue to post a reel every day, making this appeal until 4,12,590 people donate ₹1 to buy the bike he wants. He has posted 45 such posts to date, and each post has gathered several thousand views.

While many users have likened it to begging, many users have also contributed to these account holders. Over a hundred social media accounts are posting such videos asking for money to buy high-end bikes. These accounts post QR codes and UPI payment addresses for audiences to make the payment.

This has now alerted the cybercrime police, who fear this may have emerged as a new *modus operandi* to cheat people. A senior cybercrime police official said this had become an easier way out for people to make money, misusing the emotions of people.

"Most of these accounts are fraudulent, and if anyone complains, we will take action against them and ensure they are deactivated. There are also concerns that this may be misused to gain access to user's accounts," the official said, appealing to people not to fall prey to such posts.

From Page One

Mango-picking tourism cancelled amid low yield

The corporation would take people from Bengaluru to mango farms in Ramanagara or Kolar districts. Those interested would book the tour through the official KSMDMCL website and pay a fee of ₹100 for the trip facilitated by the corporation.

Visitors are free to roam the farm, select the fruit they desire, and directly purchase it from the farmers. However, a minimum purchase requirement is at least six kilograms. According to Mr. Nagaraju, the initiative benefits both farmers and mango enthusiasts, as farmers can sell their produce directly to customers without intermediaries or commissions.

Karthik Gowda, a mango grower from Ramanagara, said, "We were getting a decent profit from this initiative, but now it is cancelled. With mango production at an all-time low this year, organizing the mango-picking tourism wouldn't have significantly alleviated our situation. The reduced yield has put a strain on our prospects for the year."

E-paper edition

The Hindu offers more coverage of Bengaluru in the e-paper edition. (epaper.thehindu.com)

In the issue dated May 2, we take a look at whether treated water can be used to fix the ongoing water crisis in Bengaluru. A 2016 rule mandating Sewage Treatment Plants to be built and maintained in all apartments with over 20 residential units has led to an estimated 2,600 decentralised plants across the city. The rule has been relaxed recently, but the existing STPs in apartment complexes generate a substantial 700MLD of treated water.

Prison inmate swallows mobile phone

The Hindu Bureau
SHIVAMOGGA

An inmate in Shivamogga Central Prison underwent surgery in Bengaluru following severe stomach pain.

The doctors who conducted the surgery removed a mobile along with a battery and SIM.

Parashuram alias Chingari of Shivamogga complained of severe stomach pain on March 28. He was treated in the jail hospital. As he continued to suffer, the officials took him to McGann Hospital in Shivamogga. The doctors reported 'consumption of foreign bodies' as the cause of the pain.

Later, as per doctor's advice, he was taken to Bengaluru Medical College in Bengaluru.

He underwent surgery on April 25. Dr. Niyaz Ahmed, the Assistant Professor of Surgery, informed the officials that a mobile phone had been removed from his stomach.

It is said that Parashuram swallowed to avoid getting caught by the officials, during a search operation in the prison.

IIA releases video of the moon occulting brightest star Antares

While moving in its orbit roughly once a month, the moon will occasionally occult, or hide, bright stars that are behind, and sometimes, even planets. AP

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The moon passed in front of the bright red star Antares on April 27, hiding it for roughly 40 minutes

The Bengaluru-based Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA) has filmed the passing of the moon in front of Antares, a bright red star.

The moon passed in front of Antares on April 27, hiding it for roughly 40 minutes. IIA said that this event was visible only from southern India.

IIA filmed the event from its Bengaluru campus using a camera on an 8-inch telescope.

While moving in its orbit roughly once a month, the moon will occasionally occult, or hide, bright stars that are behind, and sometimes, even planets.

This happens now and then for the star Antares (Jyeshtha), which is the brightest star in the constellation of Scorpius. Since the moon is relatively close to the Earth, such occultations will be visible only from some locations on the globe, similar to why a solar eclipse is seen only from a particular part of the globe.

The last such occultation of Antares, which was visible from India, was on February 5 this year.

The next one will be in June 2027. As seen from Bengaluru, Antares disappeared behind the bright side of the gibbous moon around 1.13 a.m. and reappeared at the darker side around 1.53 a.m.

Timings
BENGALURU

THURSDAY, MAY. 02		
RISE	05:59	SET 18:35
RISE	01:20	SET 13:08
FRIDAY, MAY. 03		
RISE	05:58	SET 18:35
RISE	02:06	SET 14:05
SATURDAY, MAY. 04		
RISE	05:58	SET 18:35
RISE	02:50	SET 15:02

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	37	27
Mysuru	38	25
Bengaluru	38	25

Bengaluru Today
38°C Morning will be pleasant Day will be slight hot and uneasy. Heat wave is likely. Chances of light rain and thundershower.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
37°C The weather will be dry. Day will be very warm with uneasy afternoon. Night will comfortable

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THE HINDU
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ISRO finds proof of enhanced possibility of water ice in polar craters of the moon

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A study by Indian space scientists has found evidence of enhanced possibility of water ice occurrence in the polar craters of the moon.

The study was done by scientists of ISRO's Space Applications Centre (SAC) in collaboration with researchers of IIT Kanpur, University of Southern California, Jet Propulsion Laboratory and IIT (ISM) Dhanbad.

The study suggests that the amount of sub-surface ice in the first couple of metres is about five to eight times larger than the one on the surface in both poles. As such, drilling on the moon to sample or excavate that ice will be primordial for future missions and long-term human presence.

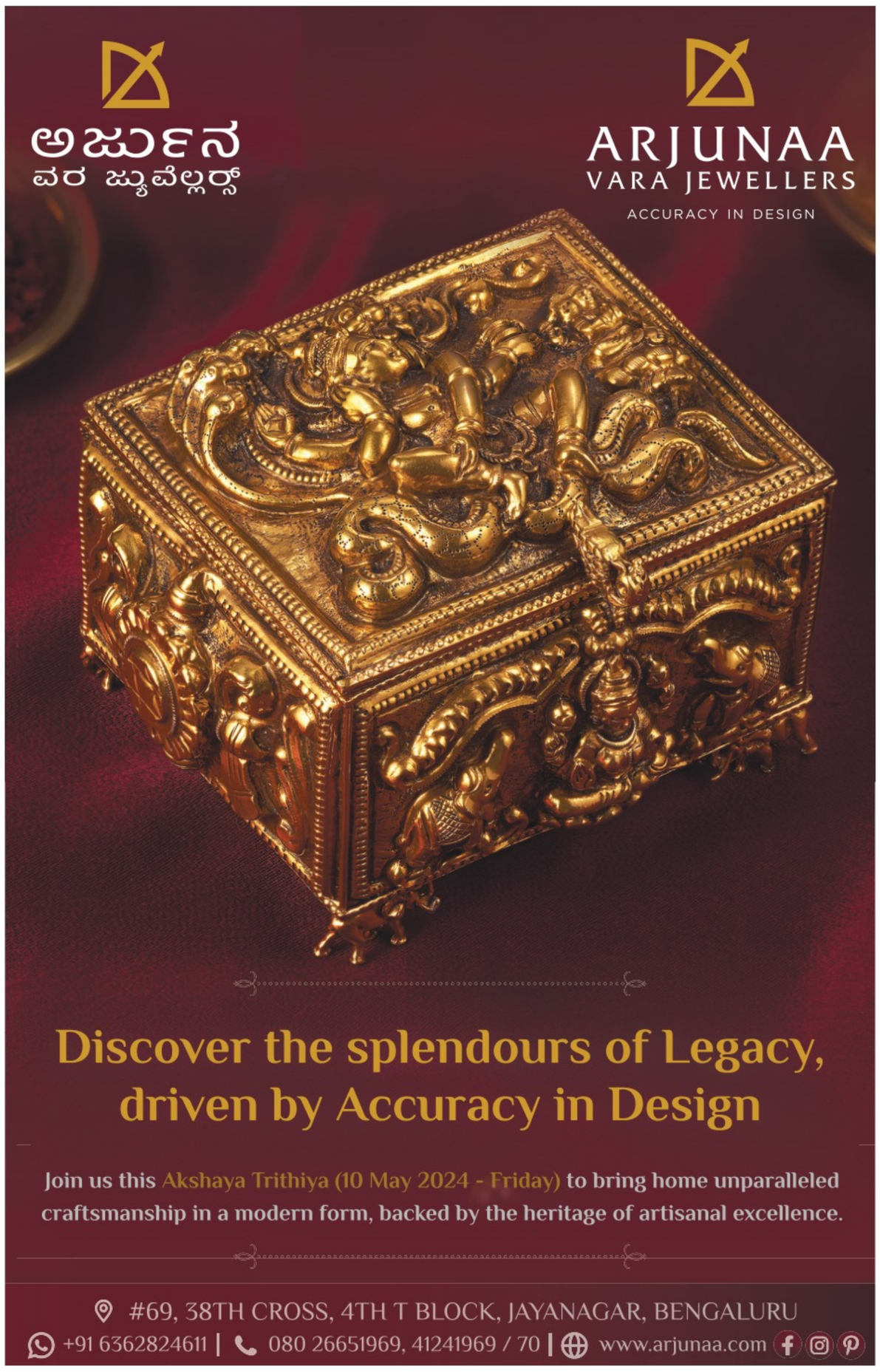
Moreover, the study suggests that the extent of water ice in the northern polar region is twice that in the southern polar region.

The study confirms the hypothesis that the primary source of sub-surface water ice in the lunar poles is out-gassing during volcanism in the Imbrian period. The results also conclude that the distribution of water ice is likely governed by mare volcanism and preferential impact cratering.

The research team used seven instruments comprising radar, laser, optical, neutron spectrometer, ultra-violet spectrometer, and thermal radiometer on board the NASA robotic spacecraft Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter to understand the origin and distribution of water ice on the Moon.

Accurate knowledge of the distribution and depth of water ice occurrence in the lunar poles, as presented in the investigation, is crucial for constraining the uncertainties in selecting future landing and sampling sites for missions aimed at exploring and characterising lunar volatiles.

This result also supports a previous study of SAC-ISRO pointing out the possibility of the presence of water ice in some of the polar craters, utilising polarimetric radar data from Chandrayaan-2 Dual-frequency Synthetic Aperture Radar instrument.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Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

The number of people killed in the Gaza Strip in the past 24 hours

33 The health ministry estimates the overall Palestinian death toll from the Israel-Hamas war to at least 34,568. The war has flattened huge swaths of Gaza's north, and famine is imminent for the hundreds of thousands of civilians who remain there. AP

The period after which abortions are banned in Florida

6 in weeks. Florida's ban on most abortions after six weeks of pregnancy, before many women even know they are pregnant, has gone into effect. Some doctors are concerned that women in the state will no longer have access to needed health care. AP

The share of India in global CO2 emissions from aviation

3 In percentage. India was among the top five economically developing countries in terms of carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions from aviation in 2019, a new research has found. India's share in global CO_2 emissions from domestic aviation was the third highest at 1.5%. PTI

The cost of quality concerns over India's spice exports

700 in $ million. With concerns threatening over half of the shipments, swift action is crucial to restore global trust and uphold the reputation of India's spice trade amid recent regulatory actions and health violations. PTI

Increase in petrol sales in April compared to the year-ago period

12.3 In percentage. Petrol sales were up mostly due to an increase in the use of personal vehicles on the back of a price cut, crop harvesting season and the onset of summer. PTI

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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Analysing labour on a warming planet

The link between labour productivity, human health and climate change gets scant attention, as the focus remains on economic and infrastructure resilience. The International Labour Organization's latest report points to the need to ensure that labour becomes climate proofed

FULL CONTEXT

Kunal Shankar

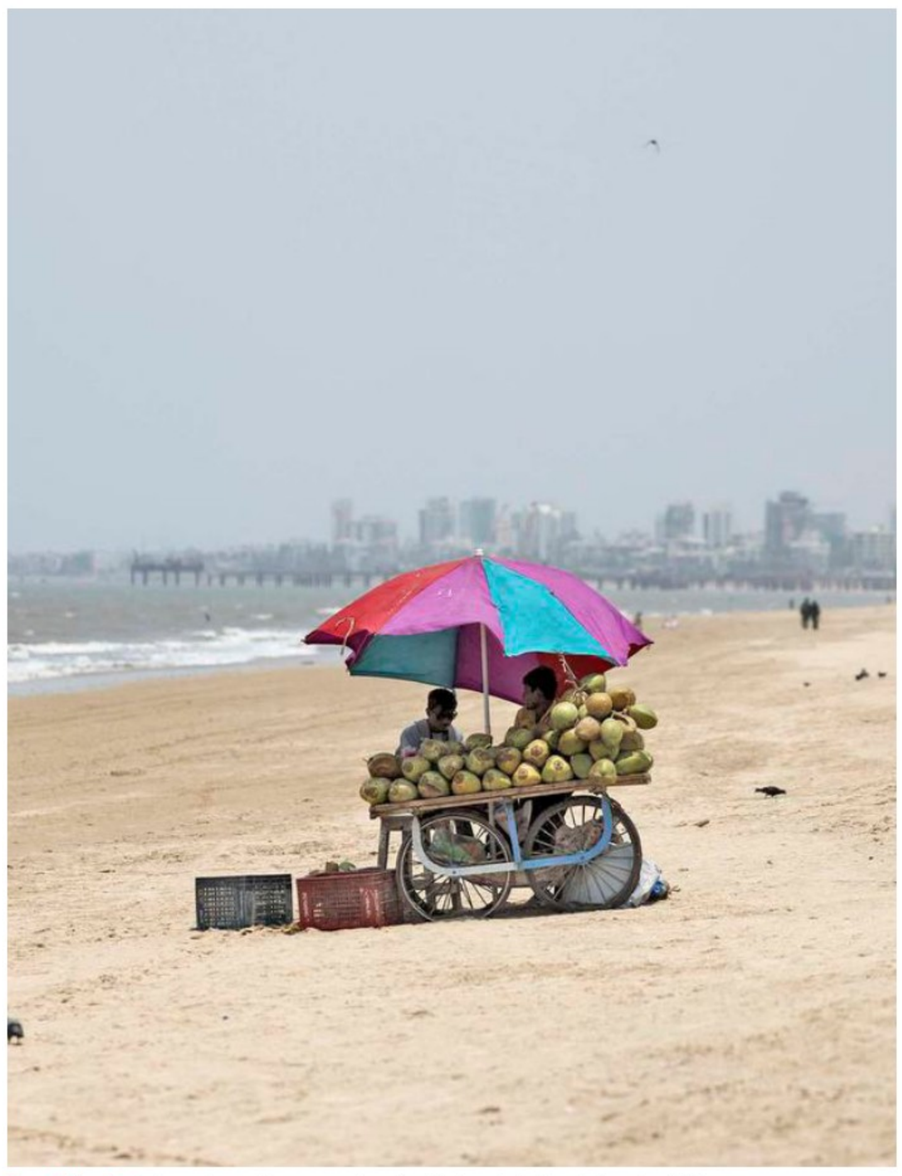
The story so far:
The International Labour Organization's (ILO) latest report, 'Ensuring safety and health at work in a changing climate', is an urgent call to ensure the future of labour is climate proofed and to address the constantly evolving work environment as the planet warms. The UN body states that well over a third of the world's population, are exposed to excessive heat annually, leading to almost 23 million work-related injuries.

What are the emerging hazards?
The ILO has identified six key impacts of climate change. They are – excessive heat, solar ultraviolet radiation, extreme weather events, workplace air pollution, vector-borne diseases and agrochemicals. These could lead to a range of health issues such as stress, stroke and exhaustion. The ILO mentions agriculture workers, workers in the construction sector, conservancy workers in cities and those employed in transport and tourism as most affected by climate change. It is also important to take note of the global rise in gig employment, which is highly heat-susceptible. Gig workers constitute about 1.5% of India's total work force, which is projected to grow to about 4.5% by 2030, according to a Nasscom study. In the Indian context, all these segments put together suggest that about 80% of the country's 2023 workforce of 600 million is susceptible to heat-related hazards.

Which sectors are affected?
Agriculture is by far the most heat susceptible sector globally, particularly so in the developing world, where informal farm labourers work with little to no weather protection. The NSSO data of July 2018-June 2019 reveal that almost 90% of Indian farmers own less than two hectares of land, and earn an average monthly income of a little over ₹10,000 with farmers in the bottom three States of Jharkhand, Odisha and West Bengal earning as low as ₹4,895, ₹5,112, and ₹6,762. This leaves little room for them to invest in adapting to a warming planet.

Agriculture is followed by India's sprawling Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector that employs about 21% of the country's workforce, or more than 123 million workers. The overwhelming informalisation of the sector has meant little to no oversight of worker conditions by State Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) departments, leaving them highly vulnerable to heat hazards. This sector is followed by the building and construction segment which constitutes about 70 million workers, almost 12% of India's workforce. Workers here must cope with the urban heat island effect, as construction is a highly urban-centric economy, with rising growth in cities. Construction workers are also the most prone to physical injuries and air pollution related health hazards, like asthma, as several Indian cities are among the most polluted globally.

What laws address workplace safety ?
A range of more than 13 central laws in India including, the Factories Act, 1948, the Workmen Compensation Act, 1923, the Building and Other Construction Workers Act, 1996, the Plantations Labour Act, 1951, the Mines Act, 1952 and the Inter-State Migrant Workmen Act, 1979, regulate working conditions across several sectors. These laws were consolidated and amended in September 2020 under one law – the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020 (OSH Code, 2020). While several unions are critical of the new law for watering down safety and inspection standards, the Union government is yet to officially notify its enforcement. This has meant that unions and the judiciary continue to rely on the older laws to seek redress and accountability.



Scorching heat: A vendor selling coconut water at a beach in Mumbai on April 29. REUTERS

The Indian Factories Act defines a factory as an enterprise with "10 or more" workers, but those registered under this law are less than a quarter of a million based on the latest available data. The Labour Bureau in its 2020 report observes "an increase of 2.48% in the number of total registered factories that is, from 2,22,012 in the beginning of the year to 2,27,510 at the end of the year 2020." This means the overwhelming majority of India's 64 million MSMEs are not registered under this law, and are therefore outside the purview of governmental inspections.

What do they say about heat hazards?
When it comes to dealing with occupational heat, the Factories Act broadly defines "ventilation and temperature" and leaves it to the States to decide optimal standards based on specific industries. However, these regulations were framed more than five decades back. For instance, Maharashtra framed its rules under the law in 1963, while Tamil Nadu did so in 1950. Both these rules mention a maximum wet bulb temperature of 30°C on a shop floor with a height of 1.5 metres and also mention provisioning "adequate air movement of at least 30 meters per minute".

But these rules lack a breakdown of thermal comfort based on the level of activity, nor do they mention air conditioning, or other cooling alternatives. This is not surprising as the rules were framed much before air conditioning became common as a heat coping method. But in the developing world, air conditioning is still a luxury at homes and a significant expense for businesses. With a warming climate, the government predicts 50% of Indian homes would have ACs by 2037, but we lack these numbers for businesses, indicating an urgent need to update India's Factories Act to incorporate technological changes in provisioning thermal comfort at businesses and add more categories of industries based on evolving production processes. Brazil for instance, mandates a stoppage of work "in cases where the WBGT (Wet Bulb Global Temperature) rises above 29.4°C for low intensity work, 27.3°C for moderate intensity work, 26.0°C for high intensity work, and 24.7°C for very high intensity work," the ILO mentions.

Speaking about extreme heat and instances of friction with top corporate management, S. Kannan, the leader of the recognised union at the BMW assembly plant at Mahindra World City, Chennai (which represents more than 200 of the 350 employees), pointed to an instance at the company where workers demanded additional "lemon juice, buttermilk, and tender coconuts at the canteen" to ensure hydration last year. He claimed that the workers concerns were scoffed at by the management as "petty" issues for "high income earners". Moreover, Mr. Kannan said that unions are pressured to submit not only from the management but from the State's bureaucracy who point to the "difficulty" in getting top class industries to set up shop in Tamil Nadu. They accuse unions of disincentivising MNCs from their expansion plans.

What about other climate hazards?
Amendments are also required to address the handling of effluents and byproducts disposal, as they could significantly impact human health based on temperature. Hindustan Unilever's thermometer manufacturing plant in Kodaikanal, Tamil Nadu was shut in 2001, as it was found disposing mercury-laced glass waste in the centre of the town. *Frontline* reports that the company dumped 7.4 tonnes, leaving townspeople exposed to a highly toxic and vapourable chemical that causes a range of diseases from birth defects to several types of cancer. "This was our main case in the Madras High Court against the company," tells S. Meenakshi, who was among a battery of lawyers representing retrenched workers and townspeople seeking redress for the serious illnesses caused across Kodaikanal that were attributed to Mercury exposure. A charge denied by Unilever, even as it reached an out of court settlement with workers in 2016 after a decades-long battle.

Another significant occupational illness to be addressed in the coming decades would be the possible rise in silicosis cases. Silicosis is a fatal and incurable pulmonary disease caused by what is commonly called "lung dust", the fine particulate matter emitted in the mines of coal, precious gems like quartz and diamonds and stone quarries. India is set to record its highest coal production ever in the financial year 2023-24 and has expanded the number of mines to meet rising power demand, leading to an increase in the probability of silica exposure. In 2016, the Supreme Court ordered the Gujarat government to pay ₹3 lakh as compensation to the families of 238 victims who died of silicosis while working at a quartz mine in Godhra. The Court blamed Gujarat's bureaucracy for 'neglecting' to protect the adivasi migrant labourers who worked in the mines.

It would have been the job of inspectors under the Factories Act to inspect and enforce the provisioning gears that protect employees from silica exposure. While the T.N. and Maharashtra rules under the Factories Act elaborate on silica exposure prevention, they do not mandate the use of silica removal technologies at stone quarries or mines. Again, these technologies were not available when these rules were framed. Mr. Kannan says that, "labour conciliation, industrial safety and worker welfare are weak wings of the government. There are several vacancies, both at the inspector level, and at the clerical level, and our main concern is training, sensitisation and the competence of inspectors to conduct specialised inspections." He spoke about instances where inspectors fear the "influence that private sector management, particularly, MNC's wield" with State bureaucrats. However, a retired official from Tamil Nadu's Directorate of Industrial Safety and Health, R. Jayakumar countered the charge of incompetence and unfilled job posts in the department he headed. He stated vacancies might have been temporary. "In fact, when the BOCW Act (Buildings and Construction Workers Act, 1996) was enacted, we formed a new wing and created new posts to look into its implementation," Mr. Jayakumar said, referring to the law that regulates employment in the construction sector. But he admitted that climate change raises concerns about working conditions.

Often the link between labour productivity, human health and climate change gets scant attention, as the focus remains on economic and infrastructure resilience. The ILO report points to the need to ensure a universally accepted regulatory framework to climate-proof work and workers.

THE GIST

- The ILO has identified six key impacts of climate change. They are — excessive heat, solar ultraviolet radiation, extreme weather events, workplace air pollution, vector-borne diseases and agrochemicals.
- When it comes to dealing with occupational heat, the Factories Act broadly defines "ventilation and temperature" and leaves it to the States to decide optimal standards based on specific industries. However, these regulations were framed more than five decades back.
- Amendments are also required to address the handling of effluents and byproducts disposal, as they could significantly impact human health based on temperature.

CM questions Shah on 'regard for women'

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Wednesday to took to X to "thank" Union Minister Amit Shah "for finally expressing outrage in the Prajwal Revanna matter" and argued that the conduct of the BJP in the past makes this regret hard to trust. "Can we forget how Olympian girls were sexually harassed by your MP? Who did you stand with? Your MP, of course, and you let the women athletes sit in protests on the streets of Delhi for weeks," he said, referring to the case of women wrestlers' protest over alleged sexual harassment by BJP MP Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh.

"... Can we forget how your party stood behind the perpetrators in the Unnao case, where a minor Dalit girl was raped and murdered? Can we forget how your party defended Hathras rape case perpetrators?" the CM asked.

Siddaramaiah

Revanna conducts rituals at his home in Holenarasipur

The former Minister H.D. Revanna, facing charges of sexual abuse, was busy organising a 'homa' at his residence in Holenarasipur on Wednesday.

The SIT, investigating allegations of sexual abuse against Mr. Revanna and his son Prajwal Revanna, has summoned him for questioning. It is said that the police pasted copies of the notice on the front wall of his residence.

When the media reached Holenarasipur on the day, priests were busy holding rituals in Mr. Revanna's house. Mr. Revanna and his wife, Bhavani Revanna, took part in the rituals. As he came out of the house after the rituals, Mr. Revanna said the allegations against him were part of a conspiracy.

"The pen drive with alleged sex videos of Prajwal Revanna was doing the rounds for some time. Why did the Congress government delay booking a case then?

PRALHAD JOSHI,
Union Minister

'Pay us wages'

Pitching implementation of the guarantee schemes as "work completed as promised", RDPR Minister Priyank Kharge has sought votes as "wages" for the work done. Speaking in Chittapur Assembly segment in Kalaburagi parliamentary constituency, he said while the State government had ushered in guarantees, more would follow if the Congress is voted to power at the Centre.

"H.D. Kumaraswamy and some BJP leaders were aware of the pen drive before anyone else. They are trying to blame it on D.K. Shivakumar to save themselves.

D.K. SURESH,
Bengaluru Rural MP

Poll participation

Total third-gender electors identified: 42,756

No. of members enrolled in 2024: 5,012

Voter turnout in 14 constituencies that went to the polls on April 26: 21.75%

Highest turnout		Lowest turnout	
Chitradurga	37.5%	Bengaluru South	12.5%
Kolar	32.23%	Bengaluru Central	18.2%
Chickballapur	30.83%	Bengaluru North	18.54%

Third-gender voter turnout less than 22% in 14 constituencies

Afshan Yasmeen
BENGALURU

The number of other gender electors in Karnataka has seen a 3.85% rise in this Lok Sabha election – from 4,826 in 2019 to 5,012 in 2024. While 3,067 electors from this group were eligible to vote in the 14 constituencies that went to the polls on April 26, the turnout remained a mere 21.75%.

According to data from the Election Commission, the number of third-gender voters in the State rose to 4,826 in 2019 from 3,890 in 2014. While a voter turnout of 11.49% was recorded in 2019, 9.8% of the registered electors turned up to vote in 2014.

In the 14 constituencies that went to the polls on April 26, three parliamentary constituencies recorded more than 30% turnout in the category. While the Chitradurga parliamentary constituency recorded the highest turnout at 37.5%, Kolar and Chickballapur followed with 32.23% and 30.83% turnout, respectively. The lowest turnout was recorded in Bengaluru South at 12.5% followed by Bengaluru Central and Bengaluru North at 18.2% and 18.54%, respectively.

Manoj Kumar Meena, Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) for Karnataka, said although around 42,756 electors had been identified in the third-gender category this time, only 5,102 actually got themselves enrolled. This was because a majority of those identified preferred to register under 'male' or 'female' gender, he said.

During the 2023 Assembly polls, the Election Commission (EC) for the first time chose a transgender person, Manjamma Jogati, as a poll icon to motivate the community to get enrolled and come out to vote. She continues to be the ambassador for the Lok Sabha polls too, Mr. Meena said.

P.S. Vastrad, State nodal officer for Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation programme (SVEEP), said the turnout in the third-gender category in the second phase had not crossed 22% despite efforts to sensitise and engage with transgender activists and community leaders to get all enrolled members from the third-gender group to come out and vote.

No Census

Akkai Padmashali, transgender rights activist and founder of Ondede, which works for the LGBT community, said no clear numbers are available on the transgender community because there has been no Census. "According to our estimation, the actual number of transgender persons in the State could be around five lakh. We want the government to conduct a Census before the BBMP and other local body polls," she said.

Pointing out that although a majority of transgender persons in urban areas are aware of their rights, they face difficulties in registration as they do not possess valid documents.

Lack of documents

Ms. Jogati said a majority of the community members are not able to get enrolled owing to a lack of documents. "Members are known by different names and most of them would have changed their identity. Technical issues such as getting school certificates with their changed names are a challenge. Officials demand address proof and medical certificates. Where will our members get these certificates from?" she asked.

Who allowed Prajwal to flee? Shah and Cong. leaders point fingers at each other

Union Home Minister accuses Congress govt. of allowing Prajwal to leave the country; CM seeks Modi's intervention to 'ensure swift return of the MP'

BLAME GAME

The Hindu Bureau
HUBBALLI/BENGALURU

Continuing his effort to deflect blame in the Prajwal Revanna "sex scandal" episode, which has embarrassed the Janata Dal (Secular) and its alliance partner the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Wednesday accused the Congress government in Karnataka of "allowing him to flee the country". Going a step further, he accused both Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar of "not taking any action before completion of the polling in the Vokkaliga belt of the State".

This comes on a day when Mr. Siddaramaiah wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeking his intervention to "ensure the swift return of the absconding Member of Parliament to face the full force of the law". The accused MP is believed to be in Germany and in a social media post stated that he had sought seven days to return and face the probe in the case.

Addressing an election rally at Nehru Stadium in Hubballi, Mr. Shah clarified that although Mr. Prajwal Revanna was an ally, "the party would not stand with him" and they would "ensure that most severe punishment was given to him".

"Our stand is clear. Whoever he might be, let him be punished and there should be no delay. If you had courage you should have taken action immediately. But because of you, he fled the country. Even in such cases of heinous crime, they (Congress) are doing politics," he alleged.

Several BJP leaders throughout the day took the same line and blamed the Congress for "allowing" Mr. Prajwal Revanna to leave. Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly R. Ashok demanded that the SIT should also look into the call records between Mr. Siddaramaiah and Mr. Prajwal Revanna's father, H. D. Revanna, suggesting the Chief Minister had allowed passage. He alleged that it would not have been possible for Mr. Prajwal Revanna to leave the country without the cooperation from the Congress government. "Did the Intelligence not alert the Chief Minister about his whereabouts?" Mr. Ashok wondered.

Submitting petition: Parents of Neha Hiremath met Union Home Minister Amit Shah in Hubballi on Wednesday. Union Minister Pralhad Joshi was also present.

Priyanka's charge

On Tuesday too, Mr. Shah had responded to Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi's attack on the Union government that while the Prime Minister knew of the movement of all Opposition leaders, "such a criminal was allowed to flee the country". He had slammed the Congress government in the State for delay in action against Mr. Prajwal Revanna, arguing that law and order was a State subject.

Contradicting the charge, Mr. Siddaramaiah said, "The constitution of the SIT was done as soon as the true nature of the alleged crimes against several women emerged and the victims came forward to file a complaint against Prajwal Revanna and an FIR was lodged on 28/04/2024."

Meanwhile, Mr. Shivakumar and JD(S) leader and former Chief Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy continued to spar over over who was behind the distribution of pen drives containing the videos involving Mr. Prajwal Revanna. While the latter continued to make remarks suggesting that the former was involved in it, Mr. Shivakumar said, "If Mr. Kumaraswamy and BJP leaders really have any respect for women, they must express solidarity with the victims by paying them a visit."

His brother and Bengaluru MP D.K. Suresh said, "Mr. Kumaraswamy and some BJP leaders had information about Prajwal Revanna's pen drive before anyone else. They are trying to blame it on Mr. Shivakumar to save themselves."

Meets Neha's family

Mr. Shah met the family of Neha Hiremath, who was killed on the college campus on April 18 in Hubballi. The BJP has called this a case of "love jihad".

On Wednesday, he blamed the Karnataka government for the murder. "Whose responsibility is it to provide security?... If you can't protect women, leave it to us. We will make Karnataka safe for women." The family, in a petition to the Home Minister, has sought "punishment of the highest order" to the perpetrator of the crime in the case.

Serene Uttara Kannada witnesses a high-pitched battle between Hindutva and guarantees

B.S. Satish Kumar
KARWAR

The serene Uttara Kannada Lok Sabha constituency carries a somewhat contrasting image politically because of the aggressive and inflammatory remarks of its incumbent MP Anantkumar Hegde.

The unique character of this constituency – that has a high percentage of forest cover and rich biodiversity while also housing the Kaiga nuclear power station and prominent hydel generating stations – has been relegated to the background in the din over controversial remarks and counter-offensives by political opponents. Perhaps this explains the reason for the backwardness of this constituency despite having nature's bounty in terms of rivers as well as famous tourism destinations. The feeling among local residents is that their sacrifice of giving up land for major projects in the interest of the State has not been rewarded well.

This time the BJP has picked the former Karnataka Assembly Speaker Vishweshwar Hegde Kageri, known as a sober face of the Hindutva ideology, over the Hindutva hardliner and six-time MP Anantkumar Hegde as its candidate. This is perhaps to increase its reach among different cross sections of the constituency.

Mr. Kageri, a six-time MLA and a former Minister who had lost the previous Assembly election, is facing a high-voltage contest from Anjali Nimbalkar of the Congress, an one-time MLA who too lost the previous Assembly polls.

The Lok Sabha constituency is spread over eight Assembly constituencies of Uttara Kannada and Belagavi districts.

Dr. Nimbalkar, who hails from Khanapur in Belagavi district, is fighting to shrug off the image of being an "outsider" in Uttara Kannada district by ensuring that veteran Congress leader and localite R.V. Deshpande is part of her campaign. The BJP got Prime Minister Narendra Modi to address a convention here to bolster the campaign of Mr. Kageri.

The Congress is trying to use its guarantee schemes to woo the voters. The BJP is trying to counter the guarantees through the nationalist narrative of the country's security.

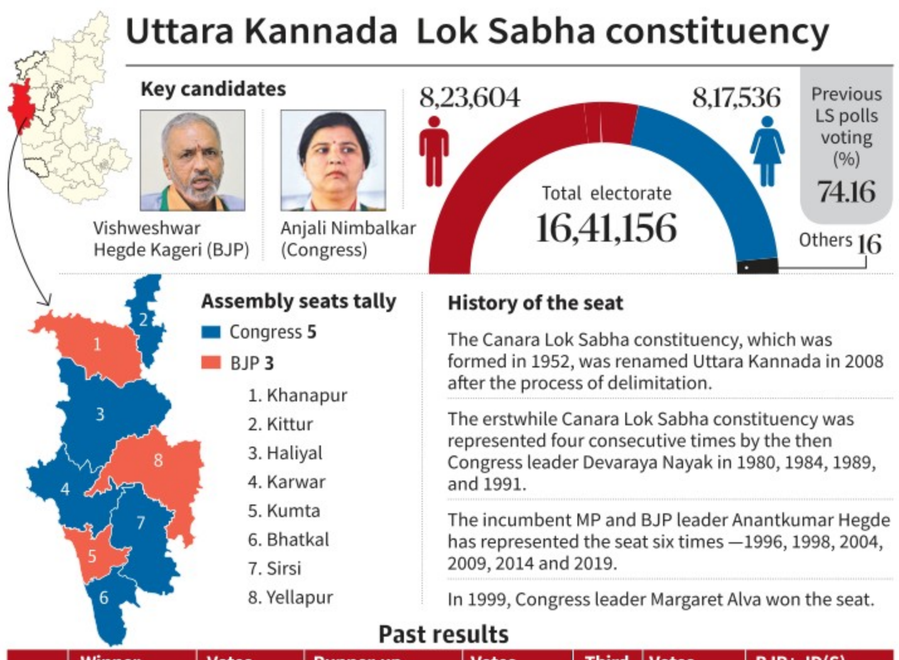
Sulking Hegde, Hebbar

Mr. Hegde has not turned up for the BJP's campaign while the party's MLA for Yellapur Shivaram Hebbar too has maintained a distance from the BJP after his son joined the Congress recently. Both Mr. Hegde and Mr. Hebbar even skipped Mr. Modi's event in Sirsi. The Congress too is not devoid of such problems as its unit here is not homogenous.

Unemployment is one of the key problems here due to the lack of any major industrial units. While this is being blamed on the lack of major infrastructure development, political leaders say that strict forest norms that prevent taking up development works in the vicinity of forest zones have come in the way of development. The constituency suffers from the major problem of people living in forest land for several generations not getting title deeds for their properties. The Uttara Kannada district does not even have a super speciality hospital.

Though the constituency has several prominent tourism destinations, including the caves and unique structures of Yaana, rivers such as the Kali and the Aghanashini, tiger reserve, beautiful beaches, and famous temples, not much effort has been made to develop infrastructure around them or promote them on global scene.

Both Congress and BJP have set their eyes on the OBC and SC/ST population while the BJP is hoping to retain its support base among Lingayats and Brahmins.


Uttara Kannada Lok Sabha constituency
Key candidates
Vishweshwar Hegde Kageri (BJP)
Anjali Nimbalkar (Congress)
8,23,604
8,17,536
Total electorate
16,41,156
Previous LS polls voting (%)
74.16
Others 16
Assembly seats tally
Congress 5
BJP 3
1. Khanapur
2. Kittur
3. Haliyal
4. Karwar
5. Kumta
6. Bhatkal
7. Sirsi
8. Yellapur
History of the seat
The Canara Lok Sabha constituency, which was formed in 1952, was renamed Uttara Kannada in 2008 after the process of delimitation.
The erstwhile Canara Lok Sabha constituency was represented four consecutive times by the then Congress leader Devaraya Nayak in 1980, 1984, 1989, and 1991.
The incumbent MP and BJP leader Anantkumar Hegde has represented the seat six times —1996, 1998, 2004, 2009, 2014 and 2019.
In 1999, Congress leader Margaret Alva won the seat.

Past results

	Winner	Votes vote share	Runner-up	Votes vote share	Third place	Votes vote share	BJP+ JD(S) Vote-vote share
2014	Ananthkumar Hegde (BJP)	5,46,939 54.64%	Prashant R. Deshpande (INC)	4,06,239 40.58%	NOTA	16,277 1.63%	JD(S) did not contest
2019	Ananthkumar Hegde (BJP)	7,86,042 68.15%	Anand Asnotikar JD(S)	3,06,393 26.56%	NOTA	16,017 1.39%	JD(S) supported Congress

'Objectionable' post against CM: X user booked

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The cybercrime police on Monday registered an FIR against an X account user for allegedly posting "twisted statements" of the Chief Minister of Karnataka to create hatred between two communities.

Based on the complaint by J. Saravanan of Sriramapura, the police have registered a case, charging the account holder BhikuMhatre (Modi's Family) @ Mumbaicha Don under various sections of the IT Act and under section 153 A (promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race).

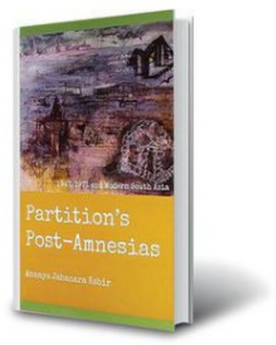
According to the complaint, the account posted an edited clip of the Chief Minister's statement on the reservation for minorities and made objectionable comments to create enmity and hatred among different communities and also to bring a bad name to the Congress.

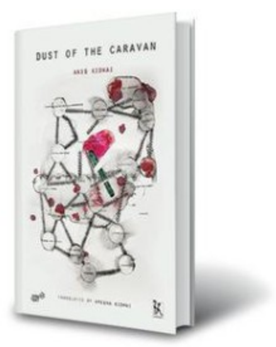
The High Grounds police on Tuesday filed an FIR against three people for allegedly posting objectionable posts against Deputy CM D.K. Shivakumar.

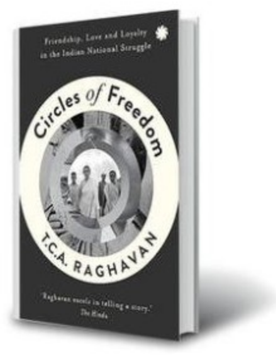
The police booked Santosh Nelamangala, Kesari Samrat, and Rajesh Gowda for postingt obscene material on social media.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

On remembering: The Partition Museum at the Dara Shikoh Library, Ambedkar University, in New Delhi. FILE PHOTO







The memories of Partition in the contemporary imagination

Historians and writers of the subcontinent continue to discover different aspects of the Indian national movement for Independence, and Partition, looking beyond stereotypes and opening new flanks in the reading and understanding of history

Saleem Rashid Shah

British historian Eric Hobsbawm once remarked that "History is to nationalism what a poppy is to a heroin addict." History is not something that can be comprehended just as a form of knowledge about the world we live in. It's often effectively used for political purposes, and also at times invented, should this be necessary for the purpose.

This past is so constructed as to sustain a particular political ideology for which it is foundational. The colonial obsession towards understanding India and its past was instrumental in strengthening their political control over India. James Mill wrote *The History of British India* and maintained that this history was essentially that of two nations, the Hindu and the Muslim, quite distinctly separate and constantly in conflict. It is significant to understand that this reading of history substantially strengthened colonial rule over India. Its single and universally applied explanation of religion as the prime cause of every major historical activity is often discarded by professional historians.

The divide

Over seventy years after India's independence from British rule and the subsequent partitioning of the country into India and Pakistan, discussions about this area of history continue to thrive in the contemporary imagination of the subcontinent. Writers and historians continue to discover different aspects and layers of the Indian national movement and Partition.

The Indian national movement, argues T.C.A. Raghavan in his new book, *Circles of Freedom*, was a vast stream made of numerous and frequently contrarian little rivulets. Millions participated in it and there were many leaders, all well known in their time but who became invisible in the dazzle of Gandhi, Nehru, Patel and others who headlined the soundtrack of India's struggle for freedom. His book puts the limelight on a veteran freedom fighter Asaf Ali and also on the circle he was embedded in and those with whom he associated himself at various points of his life and for different reasons. Sarojini Naidu was pre-eminent in this circle, her vibrant personality, her passionate championing of Hindu-Muslim unity made her one of the earliest standard bearers of the national movement.

The moderate's predicament

Syed Hossain and Syed Mahmud – the journalist and the politician – complete this circle. Asaf's story illustrates the predicament of the moderate Muslim in the national movement, viewed with suspicion by many in the Congress and as a renegade by many in his own community. Through the eyes of Asaf and his friends we encounter an alternative perspective on events, one rarely found in the mainstream narratives of India's national movement.

The Partition of 1947 and 1971 marked significant chapters in South Asia's history, characterised by migration, violence, bloodshed, and societal estrangement that often overshadow the enduring cultural bonds weaving through the region.

In her work, *Partition's Post-Amnesias*, Ananya Jahanara Kabir links these partitions, revealing a collective amnesia ingrained in the post-Partition narrative that tends to fixate on stereotypical themes of violence and suffering. Kabir proposes a novel perspective by exploring objects, material culture, and artistic expressions, offering a fresh lens beyond the conventional narratives of Partition. By delving into cultural elements such as cuisine, artefacts, maps, and folk music, she illuminates a shared cultural heritage rooted in pre-Partition India, presenting a holistic view that transcends the compartmentalised histories of South Asia's nations. The book prompts readers to look beyond the convenient assumptions of the post-Partition selves created by nationalist paradigms Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi.

Personal, political

Anis Kidwai in her book, *Dust of the Caravan* or *Ghubar-e-Karwan*, translated into English by her granddaughter Ayesha Kidwai, presents a cohesive narrative detailing the journey of a Muslim woman who integrates herself into the Indian freedom struggle. Initially viewing the world through a purdah and questioning the essence of a religious existence, she transforms into an advocate for women's rights as an activist and parliamentarian.

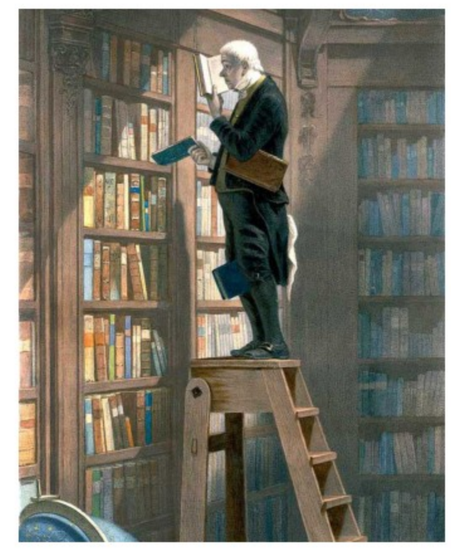
Kidwai's memoir delves into her personal and political life, shedding light on forgotten figures of India's freedom movement like Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew and Mridula Sarabhai. Kitchlew's pivotal role as a mass leader of the Congress in Punjab and a key figure in the Khilafat Movement faded into obscurity in the post-Partition era, while Sarabhai, a staunch advocate for women's rights and dissent in democracy, faced marginalisation due to her opposition to Sheikh Abdullah's arrest in 1953 and her vigorous campaign for his release.

Kidwai laments that despite India's independence, the envisioned freedom did not materialise as expected. Sarabhai's tireless efforts in assisting distressed women, initiatives for rural training, support for displaced women post-Partition, and establishment of a Women's Service Home for Muslim girls were overshadowed by a persistent societal amnesia and remain unrectified.

The partition of India and Pakistan followed the hard-fought struggle for freedom, culminating in 1947. This freedom was the result of a long and protracted effort by numerous freedom fighters against British imperial rule. However, amidst the grand narrative of India's journey to freedom, the lesser-known contributions of many unsung heroes often go unnoticed. Asaf Ali's unwavering resolve for India's freedom and Sarojini Naidu's passionate advocacy for women's rights are as significant as the more widely recognised milestones of the Indian national movement.

To clear the cobwebs and to have a more nuanced understanding of the Indian national movement and Partition, these three books serve as an excellent initial step.

Saleem Rashid Shah is a book critic and an independent writer based in Kashmir.



FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

K. Subrahmanian

"Bed-ridden, good riddance (M. Gurudass, Madras)."

" 'Ridden' in 'bed-ridden' is from 'ride.' Ride-rode-ridden. 'Bed-ridden' means 'confined to bed by illness.' When it is used in a combination, 'ridden' means 'inflicted or afflicted.'

He is conscience-ridden.

This is a rat-ridden house.

'Riddance' in 'good riddance' is from the verb 'rid' which means 'to make free, relieve.' It is followed by 'of.' From this we get 'to get rid of.'

I managed to get rid of him. He was such a nuisance.

'Good riddance' means 'welcome relief from an unwanted person or thing.'

She has left at last. Good riddance!

Rid is also the past tense and past participle of 'rid.' 'Ridded' is also used as the past tense of 'rid' occasionally, but it is archaic. 'Riddance' is the noun form of 'rid.'"

"Addicted (S. Sarojini, Srirangam)."

" 'Addicted' is followed by the preposition 'to' and a noun or a gerund.

He is addicted to drugs.

She is addicted to watching TV.

You can also say 'She is a drug addict, He is a drug addict'. But don't say 'He is addicted to take drugs.' 'Addicted' goes with something bad. It is also used humorously for what is not harmful.

She is addicted to detective novels.

He is addicted to jogging."

"Possible, probable".

" 'Possible' means 'that may or may not happen.'

It is possible that he will win.

'Probable' means 'that may be expected to happen, that has a good chance of being true or correct.'

There is greater certainty in 'probable' than in 'possible.'

Rain is possible, but not probable."

"Bundle of nerves (A. Siddilingam, Wanaparthy)"

" 'Bundle of nerves' is an idiom which means 'in a very nervous state.'

He is a bundle of nerves before any examination.

She was a bundle of nerves at the interview."

"Pull one's punches (S. Siddappa, Tumkur)"

" 'It is an idiom used in informal contexts. It means 'to soften the blow and to avoid' offence by holding back a little.' When a boxer intentionally gives a soft blow to avoid hurting the other boxer, he is said to pull his punches. Figuratively, 'to pull one's punches' means 'to criticise someone or something less severely than one would normally do.'

He pulled his punches when he talked about the plays of his friend.

It is the negative 'pull no punches' that is more frequently used.

She pulled no punches when she discussed the affairs of her party.

It means she did not spare her party.

Published in The Hindu on November 5, 1991.

THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

Some significant events occurred on May 2. Here is a quiz on observances, birthdays and everything else that happened on the day

Abhinaya. K

QUESTION 1

This British football legend who was the runner up for the Ballon D'Or in 1999, was born on this day. He is married to a singer of a well-known pop group. Identify the footballer.

QUESTION 2

Tony Blair took charge as the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom on this day in 1997. Which party did he belong to and how many terms did he serve as the PM?

QUESTION 3

Identify this best selling novel about rural life in turn-of-the century-China that won the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction in 1932. Also name the author of the book.

QUESTION 4

The first movie in a popular comic book saga was released on this day in 2008. The superhero is based on a comic book co-created by Stan Lee. Name the movie.

QUESTION 5

This song by Pink Floyd was banned in South Africa on this day by the Apartheid government as students had begun using it as a protest anthem. Identify the song.

Visual question:

May 2 is celebrated among fans as International Harry Potter day. What is the significance of May 2 in the Potterverse?

Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz: 1. The reason why May 1 was chosen as labour day. **Ans: May 1 was chosen by the American Federation of Labour to commemorate a general strike in the U.S. which had begun on May 1, 1886**

2. This incident is considered significant to the origins of the International Workers' Day. **Ans: Haymarket affair**

3. This was a social movement to regulate the length of a working day, preventing excesses and abuses of working time. **Ans: Eight-hour day**

4. The U.S. celebrates labour Day on this date as well. **Ans: September 1**

5. This political party first organised the May Day celebration in India. **Ans: Labour Kisan Party of Hindustan**

Visual: The location where this statue is located. **Ans: Triumph of Labour in Marina Beach, Chennai. The statue is installed close to the site where the country's first commemoration of May Day was held**

Early Birds: K.N. Viswanathan| Rajmohan. V| Jyot Prakash Gulati| ViswanadhaRao Batchu| C. Saravanan

Word of the day

Tendentious:
having or marked by a strong tendency, especially a controversial one

Synonyms: inclination, disposition

Usage: *He gave them a tendentious account of recent elections.*

Pronunciation: bit.ly/tendentiouspro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /tɛnˈdɛnʃəs/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

Treated water is a crisis-fix for Bengaluru, but quality matters in the long run

Allowed by a recent government order to sell the excess water to industries, apartments in Bengaluru are now looking at how to channelise the treated water

Rasheed Kappan
BENGALURU

Sewage Treatment Plant on Vishwabhati River on Mysore road in Bengaluru. BHAGYA PRAKASH K.

Is treated water a sure-shot fix for Bengaluru's perennial crisis? After decades of inaction, the unprecedented water crisis this summer has finally activated both the government and consumers to take a serious look at this alternative. Baby steps are underway, but how soon can these be scaled up to make a city-wide impact, and does the quality of the treated water inspire confidence?

Treated water was always a low-hanging fruit. A 2016 rule mandating Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) to be built and maintained in all apartments with over 20 residential units had led to an estimated 2,600 decentralised plants across the city. The rule has been relaxed recently, but the existing STPs in apartment complexes generate a substantial 700MLD of treated water.

Industries and construction firms that relied on Cauvery and tanker-supplied borewell water could have switched to this large reservoir of treated water, easing the crisis. But there was a catch.

The apartments that reused half of the treated water for multiple inhouse activities, had no way to dispose of the remaining water in a sustainable way. A pilot project by the Bengaluru Apartments Federation (BAF) could be a start.

Apartments to industries

Now allowed by a recent government order to sell the excess water to industries, apartments are looking at how to channelise the treated water.

The BAF pilot will focus on the Bellandur ward, studying the volume of treated water available in multiple apartments and match it with the demand from industries, commercial setups and construction sites in the area. Sales will follow.

BAF and the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) has already inked a deal to facilitate the sale.

The Board has announced that it will buy the water and supply to establishments through tankers. Once the pilot sets up a pattern, both BAF and the Board have proposed a scale-up plan, incorporating even pipelines from the apartments to industries.

The big idea is to evolve a standard operating procedure and demonstrate that a treated water network can be put in place first within a small area. "We want to start with a cluster. We can look at laying a pipeline from a community to a construction site in close proximity. If another such site comes up in the future, the pipeline can be diverted there. Of course, it needs engineering, planning, support from various authorities," says K. Arun Kumar, Water Head at BAF.

The government notification on sale of treated water limits it to 50% of the total volume generated in an apartment. "The rest could be donated for multiple purposes such as rejuvenation of lakes. We wanted more than 50%. But this is at least a start," he notes.

Tankers now, pipelines later

For now, the transport mode will be tankers and the cost will be borne by the BWSSB or whoever the buyer is, Arun points out. "Let them bring buckets or water, we will sell only the water. The ₹8 a kilo litre agreement with the BWSSB will not cover the cost. By selling a tanker of 6,000 litres, we get ₹48. Ferrying even a litre of water in an autorickshaw will cost that much," he explains.

But beyond the cost equation lies the quality of water supplied. While issuing its order on treated water sales on March 22, BWSSB had insisted that the quality has to be compliant with National Green Tribunal (NGT) standards. In this direction, BAF wants to explore the possibility of barcoding the water and adopting new technologies for instantaneous testing. The aim: To ensure that the quality of water sent from the apartment matches with the tested sample at the industry / construction site.

Quality concerns

Odour is an oft-cited complaint about treated water. To address this, the Federation has proposed to evolve a method of expiry date for water. Storage beyond a particular date will lead to the odour.

Quality upgrade is a must if treated water is to bring a dramatic shift in Bengaluru's demand-supply equation. This implies the quality of the STPs in apartments, besides the 36 operated directly by BWSSB, are in ship shape. There is clearly a huge gap in checks and balances, as Nagesh Aras, a seasoned analyst of STPs in the city, points out.

Efficiency of both private and public STPs are below par, he says, squarely blaming the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB). An apartment builder / developer has to obtain a Consent for Establishment (CFE) and Consent for Operation (CFO) in two stages before clearing a STP. He finds gaps in the processes, documentation on design, type of the STP selected and more.

No checks and balances

As a prerequisite to approve and operationalise a treatment plant, the Board is required to check all the plans, specifications and other data related to the STP, inspect the machinery, and quality of the treated output at the point of disposal. The building can be granted an Occupancy Certificate (OC) only if the STP has a CFO. Property transfer from the builder to individual apartments is also dependent on this.

The Board, as Nagesh explains, is mandated to block or delay this transfer if it spots any defect in the STP after a thorough inspection. The clearance can come only after all the defects are rectified.

"The builder himself is often not interested in building a good, working STP. Even if he is sincere, he does not have any in-house capability. So he hires some consultants who are also suboptimal, and they design terrible STPs.

And when the checks and balances are not there from the KSPCB, the whole thing completely runs aground."

Beyond the apartments, the bulk of the waste water generated by the city is treated by the 34 STPs operated by BWSSB. But most of these plants, says Nagesh, do not go through the CFE / CFO process.

A large number of individual houses, particularly on the city's outskirts, are not connected to these STPs. Raw sewage is let off into the storm water drains leading to the lakes.

Brahma Rathotsava and silver jubilee celebrations at ISKCON

The silver jubilee Sri Brahmotsava celebration.

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Brahma Rathotsava was celebrated on May 1 at International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) temple at Bengaluru as part of the annual Brahmotsava festival.

The day saw deities of Sri Radha Krishnachandra, Sri Krishna Balaram and Sri Nitai Gauranga were taken on a procession around the temple on a special wooden chariot.

According to a release, the anniversary was celebrated with much grandeur this year as it also commemorates the silver jubilee of the temple. On Brahma Rathotsava, Sri Radha Krishnachandra were adorned in a *vishesha alankara* and offered an elaborate naivedya consisting of 108 items.

Spiritual leaders, guests and lakhs of devotees from all over India have been participating in this 13-day event. Brahmotsava commenced on April 21, 2024, with Dhvaja Arohana or the hoisting of the flag bearing the insignia of Sri Garuda Dev.

Cultural programmes like nritya seva and sangeeta seva by renowned artistes were organised. The deities will be offered Maha Kumbhabhisheka on May 2, 2024, which is an elaborate ceremonial bath that is performed once in 12 years.

May Day

Members of various trade unions take part in a rally to mark the International Labour Day in Bengaluru on Wednesday. PTI

Bengaluru NGO emerges as one of the winners of SVP India Fast Pitch 2024

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Bengaluru's Anahat Foundation emerged as one of the winners at the recently concluded SVP India Fast Pitch 2024.

According to the release, SVP India is a virtual fundraiser inspired after the popular TV show Shark Tank. The organization secured a grant of ₹20 Lakhs to further its mission of improving access to healthcare for the underprivileged. The sum comprised a Bronze Award of ₹10 Lakhs from the Fast Pitch event itself, along with an additional ₹9.3 Lakhs raised through live donations during the programme.

Anahat Foundation is focused on improving access to primary and preventive healthcare for the urban poor. These funds will the foundation to invest in expanding their staff, acquiring new equipment, and covering essential operational costs.

Fast Pitch an annual fundraising event hosted by Social Venture Partners India (SVP India), it provides a platforms for engaged philanthropy. This year, Fast Pitch received nearly 200 applications and shortlisted 12 NGOs.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO MAY 2, 1974

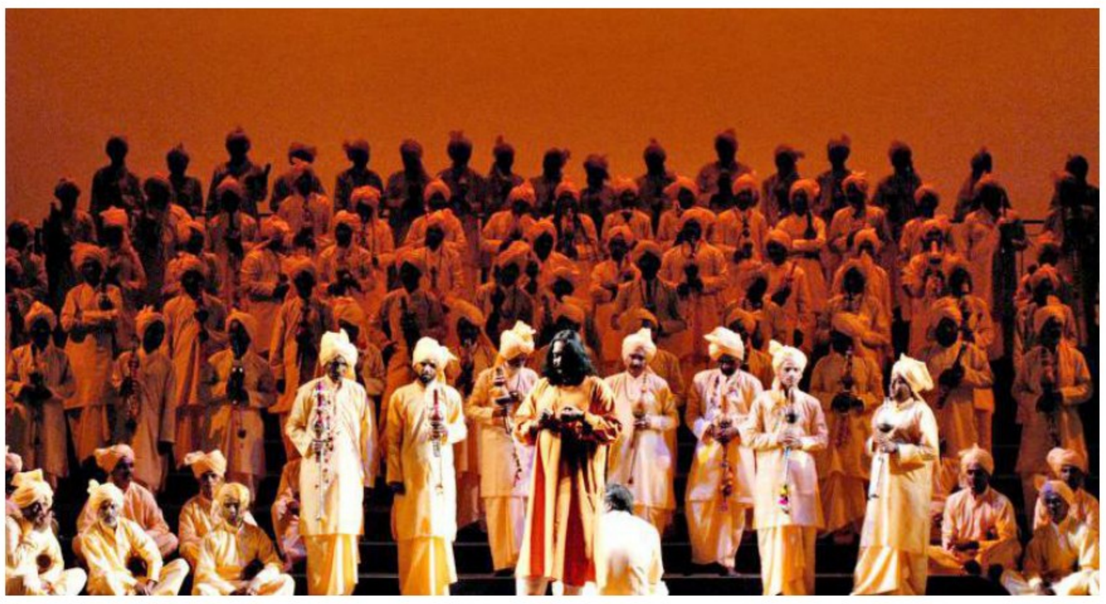
Tourist Centres with Assured Traffic Only to be Developed

Bangalore: The Labour and Tourism Minister, Mr. S.M. Yahya told the Karnataka Government proposed to concentrate on the development of a new important tourist centres with assured tourist traffic.

Mr. Yahya, who was replying to the discussion on demands under labour and employment ports and Civil Aviation and Tourism Heads, pointed out that it was not wise to spread the limited funds on the development of all centres with some tourist importance. The Government wanted to concentrate on centres such as Belur, Halebid, Hampi and Gokarna and provide good facilities for tourists. The House later voted on the demands amounting to Rs. 3.8 crores.

Minister's Absence: Speaker's Call

Bangalore: In the Karnataka Assembly today, the Speaker Mrs. K.S. Nagarathamma once again remarked that it would be to the good for all if the Ministers concerned were present to deal with the business standing in their respective names. The speaker's remarks came in the wake of a point of order raised by Mr. M.S. Krishnan, (CPI), who said it had become a general tendency for the Ministers to deputise for one another in spite of the insistence of the Opposition that the Ministers concerned should be present. For instance, to-day both the Chief Minister and the Industries Minister were absent. He added, "We are treated like children with scant respect."



In a trance Roysten Abel (below), stills from the musical. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

There will be solo and group performances by the snake charmers using the *been* to present traditional tunes, Scottish bagpipe melodies and Hindi film music

Charmed by a 100

Shilpa Anandraj

India has always been associated with snake charmers and the great Indian rope trick. We hardly see these acts on our streets anymore. "These traditional arts are dying in India," says Roysten Abel, who is bringing his musical production, *A Hundred Charmers,* to Bengaluru. "We are so much more than snake charmers and rope tricks."

There will be no snakes on stage, Roysten assures. "Else people will be petrified. In fact, when we were passing through Milan with the same production, the immigration was curious about who the performers were. Once I told them they were snake charmers, we were almost sent back!"

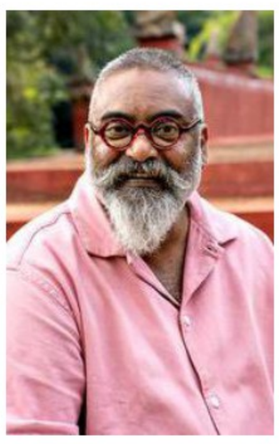
The musical will feature over a 100 snake charmers who will perform as an orchestra, which will be conducted by Roysten, who has been actively propagating folk arts and music through his theatrical productions for years.

The event will include solo and group performances where the ensemble will use the *been* (Indian pipes) to present traditional tunes, Scottish bagpipe melodies and Bollywood tunes. "The sound is just going to be fascinating as 100 *beens* will be played together," says Roysten, who has conceptualised and directed the musical.

A Hundred Charmers, Roysten says was inspired by his collaboration with Bahar Dutt. "She has an NGO Jeevika Foundation in Delhi and their tagline is 'Friends of Snakes'. She wanted to take care of snakes and also break the misconception that the snakes were harmed by the snake charmers. This fallacy caused snake charmers performing on the streets of India to be banned."

Bahar, Roysten said, was looking for an alternative livelihood for snake charmers. "With their vast knowledge of snakes, snake charmers were helping with cases of snake bites, antidotes etc. Also, since they had this music, she asked me if we could do something with them through theatre. I had worked with a few snake charmers and told her we had to something larger – let's look at a 100 snake charmers together on stage."

Roysten's next task was to find 100 traditional snake charmers. "I knew one charmer, and then gradually the number grew. As the word spread, around 500 charmers from across north India connected with us."



> I started exploring folk arts that could lend themselves to theatre. We have so much skill in India that contemporary artistes struggle to get.
>
> **ROYSTEN ABEL**
> Theatre personality

Getting the snake charmers to play the *been* synchronously was a challenge, says Roysten.

"It is a solo act and these people are not comfortable playing in groups. We first did a trial with 30 to 40 of them and then gradually added the remaining numbers. Some of them are heads of their villages from across the northern states. When we started rehearsing, it was a nightmare, but finally we did succeed."

"The best part is though they are no musicians, they magnificently picked up the tunes and *A Hundred Charmers* was born."

On a train ride across Edinburgh, Roysten heard Scottish pipes playing across every mountain and street to celebrate Scottish Day. "I still remember the effect that had on me. I wanted to recreate something along similar lines with *beens* and snake charmers."

Though this is their debut in Bengaluru, the ensemble has travelled abroad with the same show. Roysten is known for his unique productions including *The Manganiyar Seduction, Weaving Voices*, and *The Kitchen*.

From award-winning plays to stunning, larger-than-life musical productions that let rare traditional Indian music forms and artists take center stage, his diverse range of work has won him national and international acclaim.

An NSD graduate, Roysten has worked in theatre for over three decades. "I never thought of using it as a springboard into the world of cinema. As an art form, theatre does fantastic things that cinema can not do and vice versa. Theatre has its magic and I am fascinated with what one can do with it."

Roysten founded the Indian Shakespeare Company in 1995, and his initial work mostly reflected the name of his company. Later, he changed lanes to create stage productions steeped in Indian folk art and music. He gives the credit for the change to artist Rajeev Sethi.

"I was doing *Othello*: *A Play in Black and White*, which at the time was a contemporary theatre work to came out of India. It won many international accolades. I was also curious about Indian theatrical folk forms such as *nautanki*. Rajeev introduced me to traditional performances. He took me to a slum in Delhi called Shadipur Depot, which housed around 200 artisan families. I witnessed a life-transforming performance despite the extreme poverty."

At that point, Roysten asked himself why he was looking to the West for inspiration when there was so much happening right here. "That is when I started exploring folk arts that could lend themselves to theatre. We have so much skill and talent in India that contemporary art or artists struggle to get."

A Hundred Charmers, presented in association with Jaaga, will be staged at Chowdiah Memorial Hall, at 5pm and 8pm on May 4. Tickets on BookMyShow.

CITYBEATS

Treat table

ONGOING
Fatty Bao has unveiled its innovative new menu with bold flavours and interactive dining experiences. The food includes flavours from Southeast Asia, cocktails and an array of beverages. There will also be BBQ chatter party as well as yin and yang small plates.
Outlets in Lavelle Road and Indiranagar. Call 09901764711 and 918040942569.

Mangolicious

ONGOING
Mad Over Donuts summer edition is all about mangoes. This range includes doughnuts such as eternal sunshine, summer jam, aam crazy for you and more. These doughnuts will be available till summer lasts and can be ordered online or from your local Mad Over Donuts outlet.
The doughnuts are priced at ₹135 upwards and are available across India.

Fun at one!

ONGOING
One-year-old Lupa launches a menu with summer's flavours, which celebrates diversity and creativity. The special line-up will feature European flavours with a mezze platter, za'atar dusted pretzels and avocado tostada along with a repertoire of wines and cocktails.
Lupa, on MG Road, can be contacted on 8792384999

In the here and now
Folk-pop artiste Inga.
SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Finding Inga

Anurag Tagat

If there is a new independent musician who embodies free-spirited artistry, it is Inga – the folk-pop moniker adopted by singer-composer Aishwarya Sridharan.

Her latest single 'Oooh Lady!', along with previous releases such as 'Days Go By' and 'Blown My Cover' have all the makings of a psychedelic jam straight out of the 1960s, complete with hair-raising vocals and hypnotic rhythms. Written around 2017, the trio of songs were intended to be part of an EP called *You Are Here*, which is a reference to her artiste name Inga, which translates to 'here' in Tamil.

She says over a phone call from Mumbai, "It is sort of a hat tip to being aware in the moment. But also, I have always written to encapsulate a certain emotional state." The state for 'Oooh Lady!' was self-love and it pours out powerfully in the song from start to finish.

"It was written as a love song to myself. I know it sounds trite, but I think I didn't love myself at all. I loathed myself so much that for me, this song was a revelation. I actually do care about myself," says the artiste, who shuttles between Bengaluru and Mumbai.

Made with Rohit Chacko on keys and arrangement, bassist Arnav Lou Fernandes and percussionist Shahrukh Sherief Padiyath, Inga has made an early mark with her independent releases.

"The energy and momentum is from that collaboration that we had. I would make the songs on this broken ukelele that I had, which I hadn't used at all," she says, talking about the sessions for the three songs that are out now.

Parallelly, Inga was also selected and won the talent showcase Nexa Music, meeting with the likes of AR Rahman and releasing songs such as 'Say My Name' and 'Bad Intentions.'

With 'Oooh Lady!' out now, Inga likens this older material finally seeing the light of day to being pregnant. "You're pregnant for so many months and then you give birth. Right now I'm feeling like, 'When will I have the next baby?'" she says with a laugh.

Like many artistic endeavours, there is a sense of insecurity that follows Inga about whether her next work will be comparable to a project as long-anticipated as these three songs, but she's clear that "it will not compare."

Her next project is a six or seven-track collection of songs called *Intimates*, which has been in the works since 2021. "It's turned into a more electronic zone in the sense that it has been created with Logic (a digital audio workstation for music making) than analogue instruments," she says.

On the live front, Inga has just performed across the country, including New Delhi where she was raised and in Goa, among other cities. For each gig in a different city, a separate crew of musicians join her.

The artistes in Bengaluru – keyboardist Lionel Jude, drummer Rohit PS, bassist Vishal Varier, guitarist Shashank Kandachar and the Barna brothers Jonathan, Joshua and Nathanael – are the ones Inga has performed with the most, however.

"It is important for me to choose the right people first," she says. On stage and on her recorded songs, there is a primal yet polished nature that comes out through her music.

She explains, "The rawness obviously comes from my need for things to be larger than life. You're on a stage, so it had better be. More than anything, I think it's because I feel so restrained in daily life."

Beyond the plate

The Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts presents the sixth edition of its initiative, 'Shefs at The Leela,' returning to The Leela Palace Bengaluru on May 1 and 2. This program, established in 2022 in collaboration with Dean With Us (Rupali Dean and Akanksha Dean), celebrates and empowers female culinary talent on a global scale.

Three renowned Indian chefs will take center stage: Radhika Khandelwal, Prerana Bandal, and Devika Kumari. Through panel discussions, interactive sessions, and culinary demonstrations, these chefs will showcase their expertise and inspire the next generation of culinary professionals.

Radhika has steadily carved a formidable foundation for herself in the Zero Waste and Biodiversity movements through her restaurant, Fig & Maple, in New Delhi.

Meanwhile, chef Prerana, with over a decade of experience in luxury hospitality, integrates farm-fresh ingredients into each dish at Amaya in Himachal Pradesh. Devika is the founder of of Project Sweet Dish, New Delhi. She focuses on patisserie and boulangerie.

The first day of the event fosters connections, with the chefs engaging in discussions with young culinary aspirants and female associates from The Leela.

The second day will feature a delectable dining experience as the chefs present a menu infused with global flavours, with each reflecting their unique style.

This sixth edition will be held at the newly opened Maharaja Ballroom in The Leela Palace Bengaluru. Tickets are priced at ₹6,500 plus taxes per person.

To reserve your tickets or for more information, contact 89519 74424 or email: fnbsales.tlpb@theleela.com.

Chennai feels the heat as mercury level soars beyond 40 degrees C

Karur Paramathi experienced an excruciatingly hot day with mercury level peaking to 44 degrees C, highest in T.N.

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

At the start of the peak summer month, Chennai Meenambakkam recorded its first hot day in the year as mercury level rose to 40.7 degrees Celsius on Wednesday.

Blazing heat caught up with other parts of the city too as the day temperature in Nungambakkam rose to 39 degrees Celsius.

K. Srikanth, weather blogger who runs Chennai Rains website, said that Chennai's monthly temperature was also higher this April compared to April 2023. "The summer that follows a strong El Nino year is usually harsh. After 2016 summer, this year too is facing similar pattern of brutal heat as 2023 was a strong El Nino year," he said.

Though easterlies saved Chennai from peaking temperature, the 'real feel' temperature was more due to presence of humidity along with spike in mercury level, he added.

April has ended on a dry note with weather stations in north interior of Tamil Nadu experiencing record breaking temperature. An analysis by Chennai Rains blogging site has revealed that intense heat has swept through many parts of the north interior of Tamil Nadu with monthly temperature remaining two degrees Celsius above normal.

Places like Vellore and Tiruttani were among those weather stations that experienced blistering temperatures in April this year. With more number of hot days, both the places have registered an average monthly temperature that was two degrees Celsius higher than last April. Vellore's monthly average temperature was nearly 39.9 degrees Celsius in April compared to 37.8 degree Celsius during April last year. Tiruttani also sizzled during April with its monthly temperature pegged at 39.3 degrees Celsius as against 37.1 degrees Celsius registered last April. Meanwhile, Karur Paramathi experienced an excruciatingly hot day with mercury level peaking to 44 degrees Celsius, the highest in the State on Wednesday.

A mirage seen on Kamarajar Salai in Chennai earlier this week, as temperatures soar in the city. B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

Thirteen more weather stations experienced such extreme temperatures. Udhagamandalam continued to grapple with heat as day temperature of 29 degrees Celsius was maintained on Wednesday.

May weather outlook

In its outlook for May, India Meteorological Department has forecast that the State may experience an above normal day temperature.

Isolated pockets of north Tamil Nadu would have two to four heatwave days. However, the State is likely to have normal or above normal rain in May, which may bring reprieve from scorching heat.

Tamil Nadu experienced seven heatwave days in April. Poor summer rain and prolonged dry weather had also enhanced heat wave in the State. The south peninsular region has witnessed a rise in mercury level from 2016, going by the records since 1901, according to IMD.

Mayor in a spot over squabble with bus driver

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Thiruvananthapuram Mayor has found herself in a spot after she got embroiled in a road rage incident with a Kerala State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) bus driver.

Traffic camera footage broadcast by television channels showed Arya Rajendran and her husband, CPI(M) MLA K.M. Sachin Dev, heading off a KSRTC bus with their car in the city on April 26 and questioning the driver, H.L. Yadhu, for 'unruly road behaviour'.

The footage showed the car parked on the zebra crossing in front of the bus even as the traffic light above blinked green.

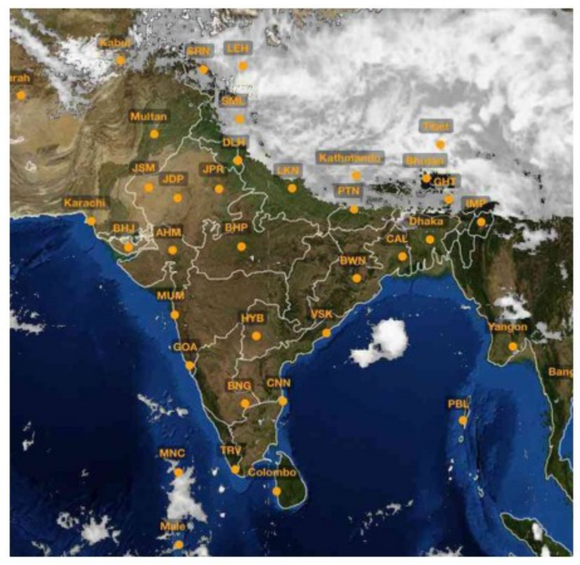
The police later arrested Mr. Yadhu for making obscene gestures at the Mayor and her family. The KSRTC benched him.

However, the police controversially refused to register Mr. Yadhu's complaint that Ms. Rajendran, Mr. Dev and two other co-passengers had interrupted his trip and violated traffic rules.

The memory card of the onboard camera was mysteriously missing. The police were not ruling out a possible cover-up or destruction of evidence. Investigators were tracking down passengers to record their statements.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 17.00 HRS)

Forecast for Thursday: Heavy to very heavy rainfall very likely at isolated places over Arunachal Pradesh, and Assam; Heat wave to severe heat wave conditions very likely to prevail in many places over West Bengal. Heat wave conditions in isolated pockets over Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	38.4	29.3	Kozhikode	—	38.0	30.4
Ahmedabad	—	41.0	25.8	Kurnool	—	44.5	31.1
Aizawl	—	—	22.0	Lucknow	—	39.8	21.5
Allahabad	—	41.1	23.3	Madurai	—	41.4	27.5
Bengaluru	—	38.1	24.8	Mangaluru	—	34.7	27.5
Bhopal	—	38.5	23.0	Mumbai	—	33.2	26.2
Bhubaneswar	—	41.3	28.4	Mysuru	—	38.2	—
Chandigarh	—	30.9	17.7	New Delhi	—	34.0	19.6
Chennai	—	39.0	29.6	Patna	—	40.7	28.2
Coimbatore	—	39.8	26.4	Port Blair	—	35.8	26.3
Dehradun	—	32.0	16.7	Puducherry	—	40.0	27.3
Gangtok	—	23.7	15.5	Pune	—	42.7	27.3
Goa	—	36.7	27.0	Raipur	—	42.2	28.8
Guwahati	—	35.2	22.2	Ranchi	—	39.7	25.9
Hubballi	—			Shillong	—	27.4	17.6
Hyderabad	—	41.0	25.7	Shimla	—	19.4	10.0
Imphal	9.0	31.6	18.9	Srinagar	2.0	18.5	7.1
Jaipur	—	34.8	24.4	Thiruvananthapuram	3.0	36.1	25.9
Kochi	—	34.0	26.6	Tiruchi	—	43.1	29.0
Kohima	3.0	27.9	17.7	Vijayawada	—	40.5	28.2
Kolkata	—	42.0	30.0	Visakhapatnam	—	34.9	29.6

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	7	43	28	280	184	
Bengaluru	10	14	13	140	98	
Chennai	6	9	85	90	72	
Delhi	20	78	101	317	271	
Hyderabad	19	16	21	130	—	
Kolkata	19	16	12	83	105	
Lucknow	9	44	17	279	172	
Mumbai	—	22	27	122	116	
Pune	19	12	64	71	111	
Visakhapatnam	13	49	18	43	115	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Gurugram, Haryana recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 301 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Ramanathapuram , Tamil Nadu recorded a healthy AQI score of 16

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

'Gujarat hegemony will not be tolerated by Telangana'

R. Ravikanth Reddy
HYDERABAD

Telangana CM A. Revanth Reddy said he will give respect to Narendra Modi as the Prime Minister, but will oppose him tooth and nail if Telangana was insulted by the 'Gujarat hegemony'.

"If the BJP wants to intimidate Telangana people or me, it should remember how the Telangana society opposed the Nizam hegemony and the Razakars," he said in Nizamabad on Wednesday.

Mr. Reddy said he was served notices by the Delhi Police for questioning the BJP on reservations and its plans to abolish reservations in the country.

454 MP, 2,387 MLA nominees in the fray for election in A.P.

Sambasiva Rao M.
GUNTUR

As many as 454 candidates are contesting 25 Lok Sabha seats, while 2,387 nominees are in the fray from 175 Assembly constituencies in Andhra Pradesh which will go to the polls on May 13, in the fourth phase of the schedule announced by the Election Commission of India.

Chief Electoral Officer Mukesh Kumar Meena said 49 Lok Sabha candidates and 318 Assembly nominees have withdrawn their nominations.

The highest of 33 nominations have been filed from the Visakhapatnam Lok Sabha constituency, while the lowest of 12 candidates are contesting from the Rajahmundry Lok Sabha seat. When it comes to the Assembly constituencies, 46 candidates are in the fray from Tiruapti, the highest, while six nominees are contesting from Chodavaram. Forty candidates, including TDP leader N. Lokesh, are contesting from Mangalagiri Assembly seat while 27 are in the fray from Pulivendla Assembly seat from where Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy has filed his nomination. Thirteen candidates are contesting from Kuppam Assembly constituency.

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Visit: France, Belgium, Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Italy & Vatican @ ₹3 05 900.00
11 D - Fusion Europe
Visit: France, Switzerland, Italy & Austria @ ₹2 81 400.00
12 D - Spain and Portugal
Visit: Madrid, Salamanca, Porto, Lisbon, Seville, Costa Del Sol, Granada, Valencia & Barcelona @ ₹2 76 500.00
11 D - Enchanting East Europe
Visit: Germany, Czech, Poland, Austria, Slovakia & Hungary @ ₹3 07 500.00
10 D - Scenic Scandinavia - Visit: Finland, Estonia, Sweden, Norway & Denmark @ ₹3 63 500.00
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6 D - Kenyan Dhamaka @ ₹1 08 800.00 (Land Only)
12 D - Grand Bargain America @ ₹3 25 000.00 (Land Only)
7 D - Malaysia & Singapore @ ₹1 31 800.00
9 D - Turkish Extravaganza @ ₹2 23 000.00
11 D - South American Delights @ ₹4 68 000.00 (Land Only)
10 D - Vietnam & Cambodia @ ₹1 98 065.00
8 D - Japan Extravaganza @ ₹2 76 080.00
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INVITATION FOR TENDER (Through KPP Portal Only)

BWSSB invites tenders from registered agencies for the following works.

Office of the Chief Engineer (Design & Quality Assurance), 9th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G. Road, Bengaluru - 560 009.

Sl. No.	Division	IFT Number	Amount put to tender EMD (in Rs.)	Last date & time for Submission of Tender	Date & time for Opening of Tender
1	Borewell	BWSSB/EBWTE/AE/38/ 2024-25 Date: 29.04.2024	Rs. 37,42,968/- Rs. 75,000/-	17.05.2024 upto 4:00 p.m.	18.05.2024 at 5:00 p.m.
2		BWSSB/EBWTE/AE/39/ 2024-25 Date: 29.04.2024	Rs. 37,42,968/- Rs. 75,000/-		
3		BWSSB/EBWTE/AE/40/ 2024-25 Date: 29.04.2024	Rs. 37,42,968/- Rs. 75,000/-		
4		BWSSB/EBWTE/AE/41/ 2024-25 Date: 29.04.2024	Rs. 37,42,968/- Rs. 75,000/-		
5		BWSSB/EBWTE/AE/42/ 2024-25 Date: 29.04.2024	Rs. 32,88,684/- Rs. 66,000/-		
6		BWSSB/EBWTE/AE/43/ 2024-25 Date: 29.04.2024	Rs. 73.95 Lakhs Rs. 1.48 Lakhs		
7		BWSSB/EBWTE/AE/44/ 2024-25 Date: 29.04.2024	Rs. 76.39 Lakhs Rs. 1.81 Lakhs		

Sd/- Executive Engineer(Borewell)

The details regarding the tender and participation in the e-procurement portal process can be obtained by logging on to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** For further details contact the above office during working hours.

ECI Approved No.CS/14/SCM/2024 DTD: 19.04.2024 DIPR/CP/RA/50/2024-25

The services story

India's intangible exports growth faces risks that warrant a nuanced response

A deep-dive research report from global investment banking major Goldman Sachs, evocatively titled 'India's rise as the emerging services factory of the world', has captured India's recent success in providing global services and sought to forecast growth prospects and risks in the medium term. The take-off trajectory of the country's IT services sector, unleashed after critical economic reforms in 1991, is well known. The firm takes a broader view of India's services exports over the last 18 years, including professional consulting, that have grown the fastest, travel services which have grown the slowest, and financial services that could gain if initiatives such as the GIFT City click. While global services exports tripled over 18 years, such intangible exports from India grew at twice the pace to reach nearly $340 billion last year. In fact, its exports growth has been the third fastest globally since 2005, behind Singapore and Ireland. The country's share in global services outflows has risen from under 2% in 2005 to 4.6% in 2023. India's share in goods exports increased from 1% to 1.8% during this period.

The services trade boom has also served as an invaluable cushion for India's external account balances against shocks such as pricey oil imports. Goldman Sachs expects that buffer to remain in play with services exports projected to rise to $800 billion by 2030. While this is slightly lower than the government's target of $1 trillion by 2030 for both services and merchandise exports, a continuing uptick in high-value services would also drive top-end discretionary consumption and real estate demand, the firm reckoned. In the immediate term, the outlook is tentative as top firms in IT services, still India's most dominant export segment, have shed employees over the past year and their growth guidance for this year is far from bullish. Infosys, for instance, expects revenues to rise 1% to 3% this year in constant currency terms. The rise of global capability centres offers some comfort. However, the firm's analysts stress it would be imprudent to take India's services growth for granted. Constraints that need attention include training graduates to be job ready, and the stress on natural resources in regions where growth is concentrated, as reflected in the water crisis at Bengaluru. A protectionist tendency in destination countries could hurt exports, just as irrational domestic policy interventions such as attempts to "manage" IT hardware imports. India needs a calibrated approach to sustain the services success story. That should include a hard push for global market access and opportunities for all professional services, as well as a light-touch regulatory approach to let new ideas and enterprises bloom across areas such as artificial intelligence, manufacturing-linked services, and blockchain applications.

Sea also rises

India must collaborate with Indian Ocean countries for data on warming

India may be roiling in heatwaves but the possibility of a munificent monsoon, as envisaged by the India Meteorological Department, may be contributing to some psychological relief. In the long run, however, there is much to be worried about. A recent study led by scientists at the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, Pune, and other international institutions has forecast – based on expected global carbon emission trends – the likely impact on the Indian Ocean. They report that the Indian Ocean warmed 1.2° C and will likely heat up 1.7° C-3.8° C from 2020 to 2100. While heatwaves are a lived experience, the study warns of 'marine heatwaves', their counterparts in the sea and linked to the rapid formation of cyclones, as likely to increase tenfold from the current average of 20 days per year to 220-250 days per year. This will push the tropical Indian Ocean into a "near-permanent heatwave state", accelerate coral bleaching and harm the fisheries sector. The heating of the ocean would not be merely confined to the surface but actually increase the heat content of the ocean. When measured from the surface to 2,000 meters below, the thermal capacity of this ocean is now rising at the rate of 4.5 zetta-joules per decade, and is predicted to increase at a rate of 16-22 zetta-joules per decade in the future. Joule is a unit of energy and 1 zetta joule is a billion-trillion joules (10^21).

The consequences of a warming Indian Ocean extend very much into mainland India with the frequency of severe cyclones rising and the monsoon becoming more erratic and uneven with long spells of drought followed by intense rain and concomitant flooding. These are linked to global warming with anthropogenic sources such as fossil fuel burning playing a significant role in nudging the planet closer to cataclysmic tipping points. Current global commitments to stem greenhouse gas emissions are unlikely to make a significant dent in the state of the oceans capacity as unlike on land, the seas respond slower to changes in external inputs. Therefore, a realistic way out is to fine-tune the understanding of the Indian Ocean's local impact. India needs to form a collaborative association with countries bordering the Indian Ocean to invest in data gathering – currently this pales in comparison to what is in the Pacific, for instance – and projections to guide the development and protection of infrastructure and people.

The wrong way to fight inequality

Prashanth Perumal J.

French economist Thomas Piketty, along with a few other economists, recently came out with some startling findings on economic inequality trends in India over the last century. In *Income and Wealth Inequality in India, 1922-2023: The Rise of the Billionaire Raj,* Piketty and his co-authors estimate that inequality in India today is far worse than during the inter-war British colonial rule.

In 2022, the top 1% of the Indian population owned 40.1% of total wealth and earned 22.6% of total income, while the bottom 50% owned 6.4% of total wealth and earned 15% of total income. The fate of the bottom 50% looks even worse when compared with the top 10% who owned 65% of total wealth and earned 57.7% of total national income.

The authors use their findings to argue that India's tax system, which is mostly based on people's incomes, is regressive, and call for a wealth tax on the rich. While Piketty's data might look alarming, it is crucial to question its use to justify wealth redistribution.

The economic pie has grown

To understand why, it is important to study two important trends noted by Piketty and his co-authors. First, income and wealth inequality in India began to rise sharply only from the 1980s when India gradually began to adopt markets. For example, the share of the bottom 50% in total national income dropped from 23.6% in 1982 to 15% in 2022, while the income share of the top 10% rose from 30.1% to 57.7% during the period. Second, economic growth in India was stagnant in the socialist decades, and began to rise only after 1990. Piketty and others note that India's economy grew at a miserable 1.6% per year between 1960 and 1990, but at a much stronger 3.6% per year between 1990 and 2022.

So, what do these trends tell us?

First, they tell us that the fall in the bottom 50%'s share of total national income does not mean that there was a fall in their real income levels or standard of living. Data from the World Inequality Lab suggest that the total real income of the bottom 50% increased over four-fold between 1991 and 2022 even though their share of total national income dropped from 23.6% to 15% during the same period. In other words, the size of India's total economic pie has grown so much in the last 30 years that the bottom 50% now enjoys higher real income despite receiving a much lower share of national income.

Second, the trend in income shares of different groups since the 1980s shows that the bottom 50% does not enjoy as much economic freedom as the top 1% or even the top 10%. The income share of any group in a market economy, it should be noted, depends on the ability of the group to compete against others in the market for a share of the total national income. Piketty estimates that the top 1% income earners in India earn ₹53 lakh on average annually while the bottom 50% earners earn just ₹71,000.

> What is required is not higher taxes on high-income earners but greater economic freedom for India's poor

In a free market economy, such stark differences in income levels would present lucrative arbitrage opportunities and help close the gap between the richest and the poorest. So, for example, seeing that neurosurgeons in India earn several millions of rupees each year, more people from lower income groups would try to become neurosurgeons.

But we know that such arbitrage does not happen so easily in the real world because of various barriers, including the poor's lack of access to capital and the high cost of medical education. If so, liberalising the financial sector and the medical education sector would be the right way forward as it would allow the poor to invest in building the skills for high-paying jobs. A hefty tax on neurosurgeons to redistribute income, on the other hand, will only impede the movement of labour towards high-paying jobs and even shrink the current supply of neurosurgeons.

It should also be noted that the bottom 50% enjoy very little protection of their property rights, which makes it hard for them to even make a living, let alone to climb up the income ladder. So, what is required is greater economic freedom for India's poor, not higher taxes on high-income earners.

Wealth inequality is inevitable

Trends in wealth inequality also paint a similar picture. India's top 1%, on average, possesses a net wealth worth ₹5.4 crore while people in the bottom 50% are worth just ₹1.7 lakh. To be sure, wealth inequality is inevitable in a market economy as the market rewards people who are better at investing or allocating capital; investors who make profits see their wealth share grow over time while investors who suffer losses see their wealth share shrink. An entrepreneur with an innovative product that benefits billions of people, for instance, would enjoy massive profits and see his or her wealth share rise. Thus, the market ensures that capital is in the hands of the best investors, and resources are used in the best way possible to create a bigger economic pie. And it is a bigger economic pie, one should note, that allows the bottom 50% to enjoy higher real income despite their falling income and wealth shares.

The extreme wealth disparity we see in India today, however, is largely not because of the free market rewarding the top 1% for their entrepreneurial capabilities. Instead, much of it is due to the top 1% enjoying special privileges from the government, which protects them from competition in the marketplace that could erode their wealth share significantly. So, the way forward then is to get rid of such special privileges and allow more competition in the economy. This would naturally reduce the wealth share of the top 1% and also benefit the wider economy since competition ensures that the best investors rise to the top of the wealth hierarchy and enlarge the size of the economic pie in the process. Free competition would also ensure no one would stay at the top forever by enjoying special privileges.

Impact of a wealth tax

A wealth tax, on the other hand, will have unintended consequences. Contrary to common belief, investors can actually shield themselves from higher taxes (including wealth tax) by lowering the amount of capital they invest in any venture based on their expected post-tax income. So, people who would really be affected by higher taxes on the wealthy would then be workers and landowners who will be paid lesser in order to maintain investor returns. The tax would thus indirectly affect the income of ordinary workers, most of whom belong to the bottom 50% or the middle 40% of the population, and hence also affect their output. A wealth tax on labour and land owners would have a similar negative effect. In effect, a wealth tax on the rich would eventually turn out to be a tax on lower income groups.

It should also be noted that most of the wealth that the top 1% possess is in the form of the capital assets such as advanced factories and real estate, and not consumer goods and services. It is thus incorrect to believe that the poor suffer low living standards because the rich have cornered most consumer goods. In fact, capital assets owned by the wealthy, by massively increasing the productivity of workers, help boost the output of consumer goods and services and improve the living standards of the masses.

Overall, the wealth tax will have a negative effect on economic growth and living standards. The right way to fight inequality and help the poor is thus not to tax the rich but to offer more economic freedom to the poor so that they can compete better in the marketplace for a bigger share of the economic pie.

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An animal protection Bill that must be moved in June

Apoorva

is the Founder and Director of Animal Law & Policy Network (ALPN) Research Foundation, an independent intersectional think-tank

Countries across the world are reforming their animal cruelty laws and enhancing punishments for animal cruelty. Recently, Croatia imposed stricter penalties for acts of cruelty, especially the abandonment of domestic pets. Amendments to the Croatian Penal Code, which came into effect on April 2, enhance the punishment for causing unnecessary pain or suffering to animals, and for killing or severely abusing animals.

Around the same time, in India, an incident involving the killing of a community dog, Jai, by a resident of a housing society in Mumbai has galvanised the demand for enhancing punishments that Indian law prescribes for animal cruelty. #JusticeForJai has been circulating on social media platforms apart from prayer meets and candle light vigils demanding stricter criminal laws against animal cruelty.

On punishment theories

Over the years, much has been discussed about the inadequacies in the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (PCA) Act (1960), the primary piece of legislation that criminalises various forms of cruelty towards animals in the country. Poor enforcement of this law and the meagre penalties it prescribes are often cited as reasons for its failure to achieve its main objective of preventing cruelty to animals. While this is true, there is more to this issue than meets the eye. When looked at through the lens of theories of punishment, the PCA Act seems woefully ineffective. According to the various theories of punishment, punishing someone for committing a crime could have three main goals: retribution (punishment imposed to avenge the crime committed); deterrence (punishment imposed to deter the perpetrator and the general public against committing such crimes in the future), and reformation or rehabilitation (punishment imposed to reform and shape the future behaviour of the perpetrator).

> Even with its limitations, the enactment of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animal (Amendment) Bill could prove to be a huge step forward

Bailable offences, weak fines

In its present form, the PCA Act fails to achieve all of these. First, most of the offences under the Act are bailable (the accused can seek bail from the police as a matter of right) and non-cognisable (which means that the police can neither register a first information report nor investigate or effect arrest without the express permission of or directions from a competent court). Second, the amounts prescribed as fines under the PCA Act are the same as the ones prescribed in its predecessor, the PCA Act 1890. This means that the fines are insignificant (as low as ₹10 in many cases) as they have not undergone revision in over 130 years.

Third, the law is worded in such a manner that the court dealing with the issue has the discretion to choose between imposing imprisonment or imposing a fine on the accused. This allows perpetrators of animal cruelty to get away with the most brutal forms of animal cruelty by just paying a fine in most cases. Finally, the law itself does not contain any provision for 'community service' such as prescribing volunteering at an animal shelter as a form of punishment, that could potentially reform the perpetrators. These shortcomings contribute towards making the PCA Act ineffective in punishing the crimes of animal cruelty.

In November 2022, the Draft PCA (Amendment) Bill, 2022 was published by the Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying for public comments. Despite widespread public support for the Draft Bill, it was not tabled in Parliament. The Draft Bill includes significant amendments to the 1960 Act such as the inclusion of the five fundamental freedoms for animals, enhancement of the punishments and the amounts of money to be paid as fines for various offences, and addition of new cognisable offences. While it is certainly a major improvement over the present law, for certain offences such as gruesome cruelty and the killing of an animal, the draft Bill continues to provide for imprisonment and fines as two options available to a court dealing with a case of animal cruelty. Therefore, even if the draft Bill someday becomes law, it will still be possible for perpetrators to just pay the paltry fine and avoid imprisonment for committing certain acts of extreme cruelty.

Words to heed

It is important, however, to recognise that even with its limitations, the enactment of the Draft Bill could be a huge step forward for animal law in India. In 1954, while moving a Private Member's Bill to replace the archaic PCA Act (1890), its proponent Rukmini Devi Arundale had said in Parliament, "India must set a great example to all countries in the world. We must set the example not because I think we are superior but because we have spoken about ahimsa far more than any other country... So the more we talk about it, the greater is the responsibility to put into practice..." When the new government comes to power in June this year, it should accept this responsibility so that the amendments to the PCA Act (1960) will finally see the light of day.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Top court to ED

That the Supreme Court of India has asked the Directorate of Enforcement (ED) to justify the timing of the arrest of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on March 21 in the excise policy case was quite expected (Page 1, "Come clean on timing of Kejriwal arrest: SC to ED", May 1). As a citizen of India, I found it difficult to comprehend the ED's action, as an election without a level-playing field in a democracy is an exercise in futility. The nation expects a clear answer.

S. Ramakrishnasayee,
Chennai

With the continued incarceration of the Delhi Chief Minister, it seems that the central agencies such as the Enforcement Directorate only do the bidding of the government of the day. How is it that when 'tainted people' join the ruling party, charges against them are dropped? The Bharatiya Janata Party seems to be trying every method to uproot the Opposition through unfair means. An independent judiciary is the only saviour for a moribund democracy.

Aanya Singhal,
Noida, Uttar Pradesh

Questioning the timing of the arrest of the Delhi Chief Minister amounts to casting aspersions on the integrity of the Enforcement Directorate. How can we forget that the agency had issued several summons to Mr. Kejriwal, which he chose to ignore? Mr. Kejriwal is the sole architect of his own ignominious plight.

Ravi Mathur,
Noida, Uttar Pradesh

Student protests

Joe Biden is the President of the leading democratic country in the world ('World' page, May 1, "Columbia locks down campus after anti-war student protests escalate"). He is also from a democratic party. But his "ironfist"-like approach against university students in the U.S. who are demanding peace in West Asia is very "undemocratic". The young should not be harassed for raising their voice against the genocide in Gaza.

P.H. Hema Sagar,
Secunderabad

It is bizarre that a leading democracy has suppressed the voice of its own youth even while it delivers lectures to other democracies on 'flaws'. The United States should be more mindful of the situation at home before sticking its nose into another nation's business.

Balagopal Gopinath,
Keerikkad, Alappuzha, Kerala

Quota remark

It is no secret that the top leader of this country, India, is dead against Muslims, come what may. There needs no debate on this subject. Whether Muslims deserve quota or not is not his prerogative. A Prime Minister making an immature statement such as "No quota as long as I am alive..." exposes his ignorance.

C.K. Prem Kumar,
Palakkad, Kerala

T20 World Cup team

While the selection for the T20 World Cup Championship looks well balanced, the omission of Shubman Gill, who, unfortunately, finds himself in the reserves, is shocking. He is a big hitting, aggressive and time-tested batter in international fixtures and in the IPL. It is still too early for Shivam Dube to play at the highest level ('Sport' page, May 1).

A. Mohan,
Chennai

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.

The trouble with the SC's EVM verdict

Vasudevan Mukunth

The 2022 Nobel Prize for physics was unusual because it was awarded not for a scientific discovery or technological innovation. Instead, it went to three physicists who proved that a peculiar natural phenomenon, called quantum entanglement, is real and that it isn't the result of hitherto unknown physics, meaning whatever physics we already know should be able to explain it. Many physicists still lack an intuitive understanding of how this phenomenon happens physically, but thanks to the Nobel laureates' work, they know it does.

The Supreme Court's verdict on the petition brought by the Association for Democratic Reforms and Arun Kumar Agarwal against the processes by which the Election Commission (EC) ascertains the security of its electronic voting machines (EVMs) and the integrity of the voting process could learn something from this Nobel-winning effort. Hearing the matter on April 24, the Bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and Dipankar Datta had an eye-opening exchange with the lawyers, particularly in two instances.

In the first instance, advocate Santhosh Paul for the petitioners said EVMs have a "source code" that should be disclosed for independent verification, to which Justice Khanna replied, "The source code should never be disclosed. If it is disclosed, it will be misused." Second, when asked whether the microcontrollers in the EVM's three components could be reprogrammed, an EC official said they couldn't. Advocate Prashant Bhushan, for the petitioners, disputed this claim saying the microcontrollers' manufacturer's data suggested they could be. Justice Khanna then said, "He [the official] has clarified the doubt" and that "we have to rely on them [EC] on technical data". In a final instance, the Bench passed the order on April 26, refusing to revert to paper ballots and said "blind distrust" of the system is bad for progress.

Across these instances, two impressions shine through; that the security of the EVMs depends on some unspecified "source code" and that knowing how something works could compromise its normal operation. Both these notions are inimical to democracy.

Why do we "have to" take the EC's word on the "technical data"? The petitioners' prayer to return to paper ballots was patently infeasible. However, while it's unreasonable to submit to doubts every time they're expressed if assuaging the doubters is expensive, it wasn't so here. By only asserting the EVMs are safe, which they may well be, they have declined the opportunity for the machine to be seen to be safe. This is a dubious precedent, but it also matters because the fundamental issue in this matter is trust in the electoral process.

In his concurring judgment, Justice Datta suggested a "critical as well as constructive approach guided by evidence and reason" in place of "blind distrust", but the EC's and the court's approach has championed blind trust instead. Distrust is bad for progress but blindness is bad for accountability.

Second, knowing how some software works doesn't also compromise it. For example, by the sheer scale of its use on millions of websites, the WordPress content management system faces more (unethical) hacking attempts, yet it continues to remain popular and secure. This may be all the more surprising because WordPress is open source; its "source code" is freely available to download. There are several thousand people who know how WordPress works but that doesn't mean they also know how to 'hack' WordPress websites.

It's not unreasonable to expect the software operating inside EVMs to meet the same standard. If it did, it would be independently verifiable and be able to benefit from the expertise of ethical testers to become more fail-proof, rather than rely on a secret that's privy to the EC and whose modes of failure may remain unknown. There are well-established cryptographic techniques to allow outside verification without increasing an EVM's vulnerability, such as tests that challenge the system's schematics without forcing them to be revealed – the way a website's server can verify if your password is correct without knowing what it is. It's not for nothing that the software underlying electronic voting systems in Germany, the U.S., and Venezuela, among other countries, is open source.

However, the EC hadn't had the source code audited by a public authority as of 2023. The Technical Expert Committee had suggested in 1990 and 2006 that the EC reveal the source code. In 2013, it recommended a test of the software's security without revealing its specifics. But the poll body has consistently refused to share the "source code" when members of civil society have approached courts asking for it. The trouble here is that courts have examined these claims from a constitutional perspective whereas the systems that execute the "code" are mathematical, and thus less protected by constitutional safeguards alone.

A software program being proprietary doesn't make it more secure; in fact, it may be less so by virtue of fewer people being able to vet it. Fundamentally, software intended for public use in a democracy needs to be open source so it's always reliable and doesn't demand trust in a single vendor. It needs to be trustworthy – bearing a reputation that doesn't constantly come under question – and trustless – not requiring someone to just take someone else's word for it as to its integrity. Trustless software in particular eliminates the room not for trust but for distrust.

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Software intended for public use in a democracy needs to be open source so it's always reliable and doesn't demand trust in a single vendor

Conserving tapestry of heritage

Despite initiatives, urbanisation poses challenges to heritage preservation in T.N.

STATE OF PLAY

K.Lakshmi
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"We shape our buildings. Thereafter, they shape us." This famous statement of Winston Churchill, British statesman and former Prime Minister in the context of rebuilding of bombed House of Commons in 1941 still holds relevance. Heritage buildings have a pivotal role in shaping the identity of a place or region.

Tamil Nadu boasts of a deep-rooted heritage culture. While the State government had initiated measures to protect its rich historical tapestry a few decades ago, urban planners and heritage enthusiasts point out the challenges in balancing the rapid urbanisation changing the face of the State and heritage preservation.

The Madras High Court's recent intervention to enforce the Tamil Nadu Heritage Commission Act of 2012 (amended in 2017) has brought to the fore the need to make comprehensive heritage management a ground reality. The Court has now directed the government to constitute the commission that would act as an advisory body to the government on the preservation of heritage structures in the State.

To safeguard structures

With no Act in place and no commission remaining on paper, some of the famous heritage structures were demolished or replaced.

The issue of the constitution of a commission came into the limelight when the Indian National Trust for Arts and Cultural Heritage took the matter to court.

The need for a commission was stressed to safeguard structures outside the purview of the Archaeological Survey of India Act.

The State government had already formed a Heritage Conservation Committee (HCC) under the Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority and had even documented some of the heritage sites listed in the Justice E. Padmanabhan Committee report along with heritage experts and architects.

In 2010, the Madras High Court directed the HCC to recommend to the State government to notify such historic structures and issue cause notices to private building owners. However, the HCC is restricted to Chennai.

It was after the iconic Kalas Mahal in Chepauk complex, Chennai, was ravaged in a fire accident some years ago that concerted conservation efforts of the Public Works Department (PWD) picked up pace. Building Centre and Conservation Division, a dedicated wing for heritage restoration was created in 2017. With subdivisions in various places, the wing has been raising 81 dilapidated historic structures across the State from the rubble since then. The government recently sanctioned ₹50 crore towards restoring renowned structures for the current fiscal.

The PWD's team of conservation engineers is compiling a list of old buildings in the State and chalking out plans to breathe fresh life into them with the assistance of conservation architects and *sthapathi* (traditional architects).

But constituting a heritage commission and framing statutory rules would go a long way in protecting buildings that are in disuse and in dire need of conservation across Tamil Nadu and also hold owners of private heritage property owners accountable for heritage revival. While some aspects of the West Bengal Heritage Commission Act, 2001 are said to have been incorporated in the Tamil Nadu Heritage Commission Act, comprehensive laws providing legal framework in other States such as West Bengal and Telangana show the path for sustainable heritage conservation.

There is more groundwork involved in compiling exhaustive and integrated data for built heritage in Tamil Nadu. The statutory rules for the State should also consolidate provisions of Tamil Nadu Combined Development and Building Rules 2019. Heritage planning experts recommend the provision of incentives to private structures like the transfer of development rights certificates beforehand rather than after preservation efforts.

While the PWD is confident that the State Heritage Commission would help fine tune its work, the act must be enforced with technical and financial support as well as with experts drawn from various quarters. In the absence of a strong delegation to protect the State's wealth of heritage, the commission faces the risk that it might turn into a non-functional entity.

Budgets and Bills passed with little deliberation

Madhya Pradesh passed 85% of its Budget without discussion in 2023 followed by Kerala and Jharkhand

DATA POINT

The Hindu Data Team

In 2023, of the ₹18.5 lakh crore budget presented by 10 States, close to 40% was passed without discussion. In five States, the Public Accounts Committee (PAC), which examines accounts of State governments, did not table any reports in the year considered. Moreover, five State legislatures passed all Bills on the day they were introduced or the next day. As many as 20 States also saw 84 Ordinances being promulgated in 2023.

These observations are based on PRS Legislative Research's Annual Review of State Laws 2023. The report analyses the performance of State legislatures in various key functions.

Once the Finance Minister announces the Budget, it goes for general discussion. Following this, there is a scrutiny of demands by committees. After this, there is discussion and voting on Ministry expenditure. However, in 10 States for which data was available, 36% of the expenditure demands were voted on and passed without being discussed. Madhya Pradesh passed 85% of its ₹3.14 lakh crore Budget without discussion, the highest among the ten States. Kerala came second with 78%, followed by Jharkhand (75%) and West Bengal (74%). **Chart 1** shows the proportion of the Budget passed without discussion in 10 States.

The PAC, typically chaired by the Leader of the Opposition or a senior member from the Opposition, scrutinises the accounts of State governments and State reports of the Comptroller and Auditor General. However, in 2023, the PAC held 24 sittings and tabled 16 reports on average in the States considered. In five of the 13 States for which data was available – Bihar, Delhi, Goa, Maharashtra and Odisha – the PAC did not table any reports. Alarmingly, the PAC in Maharashtra neither met nor released a report during the year. In contrast, the PAC in Tamil Nadu tabled 95 reports followed by Himachal Pradesh where the committee tabled 75 reports. Both Uttar Pradesh and Bihar had 50 sittings or more by the PAC though not a single report was tabled in the latter. **Chart 2** shows the number of sittings and reports tabled by the PAC in 2023.

An analysis of the time taken by State legislatures to pass Bills shows that many were passed quickly with minimal debate. In fact, 44% of the Bills were passed either on the same day they were introduced in the Assembly or the next day. The figure is consistent with the trend observed in 2022 (56%) and 2021 (44%). In Gujarat, Jharkhand, Mizoram, Puducherry, and Punjab, all Bills were passed on the day of introduction or the next day. In 13 of 28 State legislatures, Bills were passed within five days of introduction. Kerala and Meghalaya took more than five days to pass more than 90% of their Bills. About 55% of Bills in Rajasthan were also passed after more than five days of deliberation. **Chart 3** shows the time taken by the State legislatures to pass Bills in 2023.

The Constitution grants the Governor the power to promulgate Ordinances, ie, formally announce certain temporary laws, when the State Legislative Assembly is not in session.

Chart 4 shows the Ordinances promulgated by States in 2023. 84 Ordinances were promulgated in 20 States covering a range of subjects including, new universities (Uttar Pradesh), public examinations (Uttarakhand), and ownership of apartments (Maharashtra). The highest number of Ordinances was promulgated by Uttar Pradesh (20), followed by Andhra Pradesh (11), and Maharashtra (9). In 2023, only four Ordinances were promulgated in Kerala, compared to 15 in 2022, and 144 in 2021.

State of affairs

The data for the charts were sourced from PRS Legislative Research's Annual Review of State Laws 2023

Madhya Pradesh Assembly building in Bhopal

Chart 1: The chart shows the proportion of the Budget passed without discussion in 10 States in 2023. Figures in %

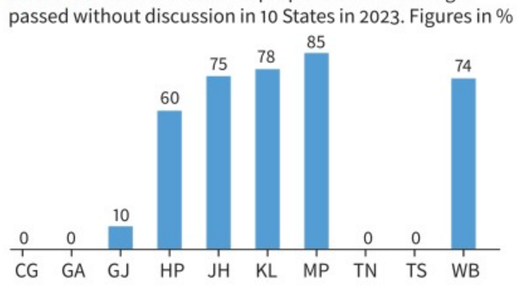


Chart 2: The chart shows the number of sittings and reports tabled by the PAC in 2023

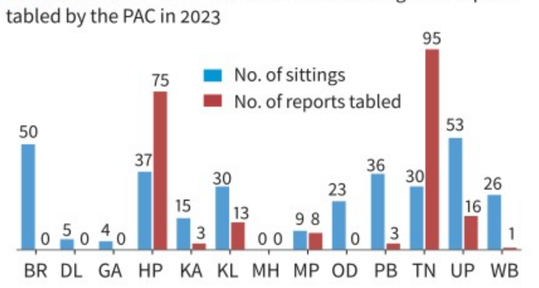
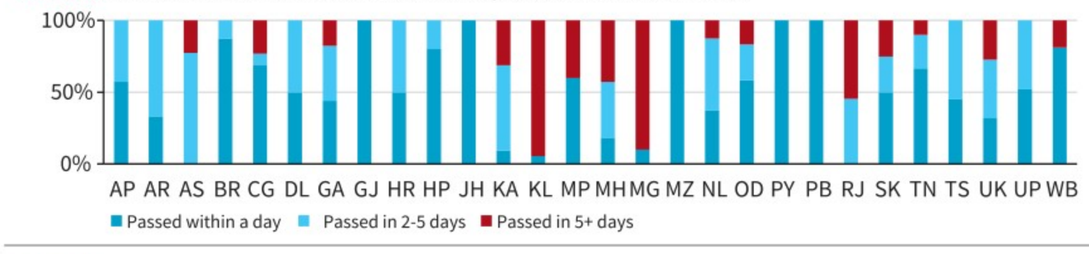


Chart 3: The chart shows the time taken by the State legislatures to pass Bills in 2023


100%
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AP AR AS BR CG DL GA GJ HR HP JH KA KL MP MH MG MZ NL OD PY PB RJ SK TN TS UK UP WB
Passed within a day
Passed in 2-5 days
Passed in 5+ days

Chart 4: The chart shows the Ordinances promulgated by States in 2023

Andhra Pradesh: AP, Jharkhand: JH, Puducherry: PY, Karnataka: KA, Punjab: PB, Assam: AS, Kerala: KL, Rajasthan: RJ, Bihar: BR, Madhya Pradesh: MP, Sikkim: SK, Chhattisgarh: CG, Maharashtra: MH, Tamil Nadu: TN, Delhi: DL, Telangana: TS, Goa: GA, Meghalaya: MG, Gujarat: GJ, Mizoram: MZ, Uttarakhand: UK, Haryana: HR, Nagaland: NL, Uttar Pradesh: UP, Himachal Pradesh: HP, Odisha: OD, West Bengal: WB

FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO MAY 2, 1974

Hitch with Sri Lanka over territorial sea limit

New Delhi, May 1: A new hutch over the definition of the territorial sea limit between India and Sri Lanka in the Palk Straits is holding up the settlement of the Kachativu issue.

It was agreed during Mrs. Bandaranaike's recent visit to Delhi that the Kachativu dispute should be resolved soon on the basis of a fresh delimitation of the territorial waters between the Palk Straits and Adam's Bridge, which would automatically settle the issue without the historical claims of either side being gone into.

The officials of the two countries entrusted with the determination of the new Meridian Line in these historic waters have run into difficulties over the definition of the sea limit in this region.

India wants the commencing points for the 12 mile limit from either side to be their actual shore lines, not the off-shore islands in the Palk Straits.

But Sri Lanka contends that its sea limit should extend 12 miles from its farthest territorial jurisdiction in these narrow straits.

As Kachativu is one of the many off-shore islands in the Palk Straits which will lie on either side of the new Meridian Line, there is a need for greater clarity on the definition of the Indian and Sri Lanka sea limits in these narrow waters for avoiding further controversies.

India is anxious that the whole issue should be settled in a clear-cut fashion with no legal loopholes left for any misunderstanding later about the scope of its settlement.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO MAY 2, 1924

Who is an "Indian"?

Colombo, May 1: The Registering officer, Indian electorate, held an enquiry yesterday into the objection lodged by Mr. Money to the name of Mr. I. X. Pereira appearing in the register of Indian voters. The objector alleged that Mr. Pereira was not an Indian under the Order in Council, because his domicile was Ceylon. The order was delivered today holding that Mr. Pereira has clearly proved that his domicile is India and declaring that the name of Mr. Pereira be retained in the register. Mr. I. X. Pereira is a candidate for one of the Indian seats in the reformed Legislative Council of Ceylon.

From Page One

April's gross GST takings power past ₹2.1 lakh cr.

Initially introduced for five years to compensate States for revenue losses arising from the 2017 switch to the GST regime, the cess is now being used to repay loans taken during the pandemic to recompense States amid a lockdown-triggered collapse in revenues.

The Ministry emphasised that there had been a positive performance across components, pointing to Central Goods and Services Tax (CGST) revenues of ₹43,846 crore, State GST revenues of ₹53,538 crore and Integrated Goods and Services Tax (IGST) inflows of ₹99,623 crore. The IGST collections included ₹37,826 crore collected on imported goods.

"The Central government settled ₹50,307 crore to CGST and ₹41,600 crore to SGST from the IGST collected. This translates to a total revenue of ₹94,153 crore for CGST and ₹95,138 crore for SGST for April, 2024 after regular settlement," the Ministry statement said.

Four States, including the erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir, Arunachal Pradesh, and Sikkim, recorded a contraction in revenues last month. Eight States saw muted growth relative to the 13.4% overall growth in domestic revenues.

SC rejects govt. plea on spectrum allocation

The application filed by the Union government had said spectrum was assigned not only for commercial telecom services but also for discharge of sovereign and public interest functions such as security, safety, disaster preparedness, etc.

"There are also *sui generis* categories of usage owing to the characteristics of the spectrum, or the nature of use, or international practices, etc, in respect of which auctions are not technically or economically preferred or optimal," the Centre had submitted in its application.

The February 2012 judgment in the 2G spectrum case held that "for alienation of scarce natural resources like spectrum, etc, the state must always adopt a method of auction by giving wide publicity so that all eligible persons may participate in the process".

Months later, in September 2012, a Constitution Bench, deciding a Presidential Reference based on the 2G spectrum case judgment, had also refused to disturb the verdict.

Revanth denies role in doctored video

Mr. Reddy's lawyer, in a reply to the Delhi Police, said his "client does not operate the X handle '@INCTelangana' and "as such is unable to provide the information sought for by you". He also said that the notice of the Delhi Police "appears to be misdirected" and requested them to withdraw it immediately.

The lawyer said Mr. Reddy's Twitter handle is @revanth_anumula and "no tweet or retweet of the alleged video" has been made from his handle.

The Delhi Police has not received any reply from X regarding reports on the identity of those who shared the doctored video of Amit Shah.

NYPD storms Columbia University again

Columbia University said it had called the police to the campus for the second time in less than two weeks after Hamilton Hall was "vandalised and blockaded".

University president Minouche Shafik has also asked the NYPD to maintain a presence on campus at least till May 17 to prevent further encampments or occupations.

On April 18, Ms. Shafik's decision to authorise the NYPD's sweep of the "Gaza Solidarity Encampment", which led to the arrest of over 100 protesters, had left many community members stunned. Over 100 faculty members from the university on April 22 gathered on the campus for a walkout to condemn the suspension and arrests of students and call for amnesty and protection of academic freedom.

According to the NYPD, protesters had barricaded the halls with soda machines, chairs and other furniture. Meanwhile student protestors alleged that the NYPD officials turned off their body cameras while entering the building.

The move also came shortly after New York Mayor Eric Adams said in a press conference at 6 p.m. that the protest at Columbia University "has basically been co-opted by professional outside agitators" who intend to sow chaos.

"Once I became aware of the outside agitators who were part of this operation, as Columbia mentioned in their letter and their request with the New York City Police Department, it was clear we had to take appropriate actions, when our intelligence division identified those who were professionals, well trained."

An alert sent from the school Tuesday night urged students on the Morningside campus to "shelter in place for your safety due to heightened activity" and "avoid the area until further notice".

(Anisha Dutta is a freelance journalist based in New York)

Manipur groups to mark one year of ethnic conflict

Kuki-Zo organisation calls for shutdown in Churachandpur on May 3, marking the day as one of 'remembrance' for their fallen; Meitei groups appeal to track down 35 of their missing people

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Kuki-Zo and Meitei civil society organisations in Manipur have planned to hold events on Friday to mark one year of the ethnic conflict in the State, though in completely different terms.

While the Indigenous Tribal Leaders' Forum (ITLF) in Churachandpur and the Kuki Inpi Manipur (KIM), apex body of Kuki tribes in the State, are marking the day as one of "remembrance" for their fallen and for "awakening" of their people, the Coordinating Committee on Manipur Integrity (COCOMI), a valley-based civil society organisation, is observing it as "the day illegal immigrants backed by narco-terrorists began their aggression", making an appeal to track down over 35 of their people who are still missing.

The ethnic conflict between the valley-based Meitei people and the hills-based Kuki-Zo tribal communities began on May 3, 2023 amid rising tensions over an order of the Manipur High Court, which directed the State government to consider the inclusion of the Meiteis on the Scheduled Tribes list.

Temporary home: A relief camp for internally displaced people from the Meiti ethnic group on April 27, in Manipur. GETTY IMAGES

In the one year since, over 220 people have been killed in the conflict, thousands of people injured, and tens of thousands displaced, many of them living in relief camps within the State and outside.

The ITLF, Churachandpur on Wednesday issued a public appeal calling for a district-wide shutdown on Friday.

The ITLF Committee, which issued the appeal, said, "As part of this solemn occasion, we urge all members of the Kuki-Zo community to hoist a black flag on every household as a mark of remembrance and solidarity. Additionally all business establishments, institutions, and markets are requested to remain closed on this day as a sign of respect and homage to our fallen heroes."

"Let us come together as one community to reflect on our journey, reaffirm our oneness, and strengthen our resolve towards a brighter future for the Kuki-Zo people," it added.

Leaders of Kuki-Zo civil society organisations in Kangpokpi district told *The Hindu* that a similar shutdown might be observed across the district on Friday. "There will be an event to honour our fallen at the Martyrs' Cemetery in Phaijang and later in the evening we will be lighting candles for them as well," Janghoulun Haokip, of the KIM in Kangpokpi, said.

In Churachandpur too, the ITLF has planned a remembrance event to be held at the "Wall of Remembrance" near the DC Office in the district.

The KIM has also passed a resolution to mark May 3 as the "Kuki-Zo Awakening Day".

"It will be remembered as a day of great awakening for the Kuki-Zo people from the ruins of the systemic persecution and oppression of our people under the Manipur State government towards revolutionary transformation of our land and our society," the KIM in Churachandpur had said in a public appeal issued last week.

Dhananjay Singh, assistant media coordinator for the COCOMI in the Imphal Valley, said that an event would be held at Shumang Lila Sanglen in Imphal East, where an appeal will be made to track down the over 35 Meitei people who are reported to have gone missing in the course of the conflict.

Centre asks States not to procure CCTVs from dubious sellers

Vijaita Singh
Aroon Deep
NEW DELHI

The Union Home Ministry has asked all States and government departments to avoid procuring CCTVs, its allied solution, and hardware from suppliers who have a "history of security and data breaches".

The memorandum comes in the wake of a series of guidelines issued by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeITY) since March after various Ministries raised concerns regarding the security implications associated with CCTVs and other Internet of Things (IoT) devices. In a March 11 advisory, MeITY said that "various incidents have also been reported due to security flaw in the surveillance cameras".

The advisory, titled "Threat of Information Leakage through CCTV/ Video Surveillance system (VSS)/ Digital Video Recorders /Network Video Recorders", said that "while surveillance technologies undoubtedly offer a range of benefits and are valuable tools for monitoring and security, they also raise certain concerns and risks. Some of the growing risks associated with CCTV systems include data security, privacy breach, hacking and cyber-attack etc".

On March 6, MeITY amended the public procurement order for CCTVs and video surveillance systems and on April 9 amended the Electronics and information Technology Goods (Requirement of Compulsory Registration) Order, 2021 to tighten the norms.

'Follow Indian norms'

While MeITY did not mention any specific brands of CCTV cameras to avoid in its March memorandum, it urged States to procure cameras made in India, or equipment that was certified in accordance with norms set by the Bureau of Indian Standards.

However, last March, the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-in) flagged "vulnerabilities" in some foreign firms' equipment. These are Chinese firms Hikvision, Milesight and Dahua; and Germany-headquartered Mobotix, ABUS and Bosch.

The MeITY advisory also suggested restricting physical access to the CCTV control room and equipment and to ensure all communication between cameras and viewing devices is encrypted.

April temperatures in east and south India posted record highs; heatwaves to prevail

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

The searing April temperatures were the highest over eastern and northeastern India and the second highest over south India since 1901, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said in a press conference on Wednesday.

These record-breaking temperatures were due to the combined effect of a prevailing El Nino and a weather system – called an "anticyclone" – that blocked moisture-laden sea breeze from the Bay of Bengal, which in other years brought rainfall and eased temperatures, said M. Mohapatra, Director-General, IMD.

Average temperatures over eastern and north-eastern India were 28.1 degrees Celsius and maximum temperatures at 34 degrees Celsius, both nearly or two degrees above what is typical for the month.

Anomalous increase

Some places also witnessed anomalous increases in temperature; for instance, Panagarh in West Bengal recorded 45.6 degrees Celsius, which was 10 degrees above normal, and Kalaikunda, also in West Bengal, registered 47.2 degrees Celsius – 10.4 degrees above normal.

In southern peninsular India, average temperatures were as high as 37.25 degrees Celsius or about 1.35 degrees above normal. This was only slightly below the 37.57 degrees Celsius recorded in 2016 – the all-time high since 1901.

Small respite: A man quenches his thirst on a hot summer day near the Light house in Chennai on Tuesday. M. SRINATH

Odisha saw as many as 18 heatwave days and West Bengal 16, while Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala saw eight, seven and five days, respectively. India's 36 meteorological subdivisions – as defined by the IMD for weather and climate-based analysis – cumulatively see 71 heatwave days on average during April. This April, they saw 118 – the third highest since 2010. April 2022 saw 198 heatwave days and April 2010 saw 337 such days.

In contrast, northwestern India did not see any heatwave day on account of regular incursions of "western disturbances" which are spells of rain that originate from Central Asia.

The hot conditions are likely to persist through most of May over most of India and this time, northwestern States and Union Territories such as Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan and Delhi are also expected to register more than their usual quota of heatwaves, the agency predicted.

Plea in SC for probe panel for vaccine's 'risk factors'

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The controversy over the safety aspects of the Covishield vaccine reached the Supreme Court on Wednesday with a petition filed by advocate Vishal Tiwari seeking the constitution of an expert medical panel to study the risk factors.

The plea pointed out that AstraZeneca, the company which developed the vaccine, has said in a U.K. court that its AZD1222 vaccine against COVID-19, which was made under licence at the Serum Institute of India as Covishield, could cause low platelet counts and formation of blood clots in rare cases.

Instagram pulls BJP video on hate speech plaint

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

A BJP video posted from its official handle @bjp4india on Instagram on April 30 reiterating Prime Minister Narendra Modi's remarks on Muslims was taken down from the platform after many users reported the clip for hate speech. The video repeats the BJP's rhetoric on the Congress "empowering people who belong to the very same community [of] invaders, terrorists, robbers and thieves [who] used to loot all our treasures."

Users who reported the clip received a notification from Instagram saying that the video had already been removed. It is unclear whether the animated clip was removed by the BJP itself or by Instagram's moderation team. A spokesperson for the firm's parent Meta was not immediately available for comment.

Israel's Likud among foreign parties to witness election

Kallol Bhattacherjee
NEW DELHI

Representatives of 18 political parties from 10 countries have arrived in India on the invitation of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) to witness the Lok Sabha election. This is the first time that so many parties have been invited by the BJP that had earlier hosted heads of missions stationed in India and political parties from the neighbourhood. The delegation includes representatives of Israel's ruling Likud party, though no Arab political party was on the list shared by the BJP.

Israel's Likud party is at the centre-stage of global politics because of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's campaign against the Gaza Strip. India's official position supports a two-state solution to the Israel-Palestinian crisis.

The current team being hosted by the BJP includes the Liberal Party of Australia, Likud party of Israel, Awami League of Bangladesh, Uganda's National Resistance Movement, Tanzania's Chama Cha Mapinduzi and Russia's United Russia Party.

Political parties from Sri Lanka that have sent delegates for the visit are Podujana Peramuna and the United National Party. From Nepal, the Nepali Congress is among the visitors along with the Janamat Party and Rashtriya Swatantra Party.

On Wednesday, BJP president J.P. Nadda and External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar met the delegation at the party headquarters.

India does not have a policy of hosting observers during the election but visitors from other countries are known to fly in during the poll season to experience the unique election system of India.

SC reserves verdict on community wealth query

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

A nine-judge Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court reserved judgment on Wednesday on the question whether material resources created by individual human labour would constitute the resources of the community.

The hearing by a Bench headed by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud fundamentally centred on the contours of Article 39(b) of the Constitution, including whether privately-owned resources could be considered as "material resources of the community".

Attorney General (A-G) R. Venkataramani, appearing for the Union of India, submitted that "if it goes beyond the boundary of private consumption, there is an element of the community having a call on the resource".

Vice-Admiral Krishna Swaminathan is now Vice-Chief of Navy

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Vice-Admiral Krishna Swaminathan on Wednesday took charge as Vice-Chief of the Indian Navy. He was earlier serving as the Chief of Personnel.

In the Indian Air Force (IAF), Air Marshal Nagesh Kapoor assumed the post of Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief (AOC-in-C) of the Training Command of the IAF in Bengaluru.

Vice-Admiral Swaminathan was commissioned into the Navy on July 1, 1987 and is a specialist in communication and electronic warfare. On assuming charge, he paid homage at the National War Memorial and later inspected a Guard of Honour on South Block lawns.

Extensive career

He is an alumnus of the National Defence Academy, Khadakvasla; the Joint Services Command and Staff College, Shrivenham, U.K; the College of Naval Warfare, Karanja; and the United States Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island, U.S.

Vice-Adm Krishna Swaminathan

He has held several key operational, staff and training appointments in his naval career, including the command of missile vessels *INS Vidyut* and *INS Vinash*; the missile corvette *INS Kulish*; the guided missile destroyer *INS Mysore* and the aircraft carrier *INS Vikramaditya*, the Navy said.

ELECTIONS 2024

Sajad Lone files papers from Baramulla

J&K Peoples Conference (JKPC) chief Sajad Gani Lone on Wednesday filed his nomination papers for the Baramulla Lok Sabha seat and pledged to fight for "equal rights and bringing J&K at par with other States of India".

Mr. Lone, who has managed a pre-poll alliance with the J&K Apni Party and support of many other smaller players like Yasir Reshi, Safina Beig and Nizam-ud-Din Bhat, is a strong contender against the National Conference's Omar Abdullah. Mr. Lone's party bagged 1.03 lakh votes against the NC's 1.33 lakh in the 2019 Lok Sabha election. The Peoples Democratic Party has fielded Fayyaz Mir, a former Rajya Sabha member, as its candidate. Mr. Lone targeted Mr. Abdullah and the INDIA bloc in his address after filing the nomination papers.

After filing papers, Sajad Lone targeted Omar Abdullah and the INDIA bloc. FILE PHOTO

Mufti, Omar raise questions over poll delay

National Conference (NC) vice-president Omar Abdullah and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) chief Mehbooba Mufti on Wednesday raised questions about the Election Commission's move to delay the election in Anantnag-Rajouri, and alleged "it was aimed at manipulating the voting pattern". "We are seeing a conspiracy [in the EC move]. The people who are not participating in the election were talking about postponing it. The BJP and J&K People's Conference were talking. It is the conspiracy of the BJP," Mr. Abdullah said.

"The authorities deliberately delayed elections to manipulate voters in favour of BJP allies and frighten the people not to exercise their franchise against the ongoing onslaught of J&K's identity and resources," Ms. Mufti said.

> Today, Cong. is conspiring to break the quota of SCs, STs and OBCs. The *Mahagathbandhan* is actually a *Mahasamasya* (problem) of the country
>
> **YOGI ADITYANATH**
> Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister

Television actor Rupali Ganguly joins the BJP

TV actor Rupali Ganguly, famous for her roles in *Sarabhai vs Sarabhai* and *Anupamaa*, joined the BJP on Wednesday.

Her entry into the party ahead of the third phase of the Lok Sabha election is being seen as part of the BJP's outreach to women.

> Was Modi ignorant about it...absolutely not. He [Mr. Modi] knew exactly who this man [Prajwal] is, he knew exactly what he had done
>
> **SUPRIYA SHRINATE**
> Congress Spokesperson

Key region: Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) chief Lalu Prasad has represented Madhepura Lok Sabha constituency twice, in 1998 and 2004. PTI

It's a Yadav vs Yadav contest in flood-prone Madhepura

Amarnath Tewary
MADHEPURA

It's a typical April day: the sun blazes out of a blank sky and scorching heat hammers the earth, leaving the roads deserted, silencing even the birds. Magan Yadav of Bhelwa-Ramnagar village in the Madhepura Lok Sabha constituency is busy chopping fodder for his three buffaloes. Some things never change.

"Only Yadavs win from Madhepura seat and it will be the same this time as well, whether it's the incumbent MP or the Opposition's candidate," he says.

Madhepura, which lies in the flood-prone Kosi river valley, is known as the 'Yadavland of Bihar'; only candidates from the Yadav caste have been able to win this Lok Sabha seat since 1968. Of the constituency's more than 14 lakh voters, five lakh are Yadavs, followed by nearly two lakh Muslims and 1.5 lakh Rajput voters. A popular adage says, "*Rome Pope ka, Madhepura Gope ka* (what Rome is to the Pope, Madhepura is to the Yadav)"

Socialist past

The first of those influential Yadavs was none other than B.P. Mandal, who chaired the Second Backward Class Commission. Popularly known as the Mandal Commission, its recommendations were implemented by the then-V.P. Singh government at the Centre in 1990, a pivotal decision that led to the emergence of formidable regional parties in Bihar and neighborouring Uttar Pradesh. Decades earlier, Mr. Mandal, who hailed from an influential Yadav family of Murho village, was elected MP from Madhepura twice, in 1968 and 1977; he also served as the seventh Chief Minister of Bihar during a 30-day period in 1968.

Later, veteran socialist leader Sharad Yadav won four times, in 1991, 1996, 1999, and 2009, though he also lost four times from Madhepura, in 1998, 2004, 2014, and 2019. Rashtriya Janata Dal chief Lalu Prasad represented the constituency twice, in 1998 and 2004.

Madhepura has also been a bastion for socialist leaders, including Karpoori Thakur and Kirai Musahar, who represented the undivided Madhepura seat in 1952 and 1967.

In the shade of a bamboo groove at Jhitkia village, Sahyog Yadav, Sudan Yadav, and Janardan Yadav are playing cards as a tractor loaded with cattle fodder idles on the road. "The Madhepura seat result may surprise you," they say. No matter what surprises lie in store, however, the man left standing at the end of the day will still be a Yadav.

This time the incumbent NDA MP Dinesh Chandra Yadav of the Janata Dal(U) is pitted against *mahagathbandhan* candidate Kumar Chandradeep Yadav of the RJD, an English professor in a Patna college, but also son of former Madhepura MP Ramendra Kumar Yadav 'Ravi'.

After delimitation in 2008, the Madhepura seat includes six Assembly constituencies: Madhepura, Alamganj, and Bihariganj in Madhepura district, and Sonbarsa, Saharsa, and Mahishi in the neighboring Saharsa district. Of the six, JD(U) MLAs represent four Assembly segments while the RJD and the BJP represent one each.

Madhepura goes to the polls on May 7.

'Our candidates are very good, and we have good coordination among allies'

The Maharashtra Chief Minister says NDA is in prime position to win and that the work of the *Mahayuti* government in the State has been exemplary; he adds that there are no differences between his Sena faction and BJP, but the Opposition MVA is facing rebel candidates in various seats

INTERVIEW

Eknath Shinde

Nistula Hebbar

Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde is facing his first big electoral test after splitting the Shiv Sena and forming a new government in the State. He speaks on his government, the NDA, and poll prospects. Excerpts:

The Maharashtra poll is being seen as the most challenging for the NDA among all States.

Not at all, we are in prime position, we are winning all five seats in the first phase. In the past two years, the kind of work that our *Mahayuti* government has done in reviving projects such as the Metro, the Nagpur-Mumbai Samriddhi Express, the Atal Setu, the Jalyukta Shivir, has been exemplary, especially looking at how all work was at a stop under the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government. The work done by Prime Minister [Narendra] Modi in his 10 years at the helm was not seen before, even [during] 60 years under the Congress.

Politically, however, there have been unprecedented political alliances in Maharashtra that confuse the situation.

It is true that nobody could have dreamt before 2019 that the Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray) and the Congress could come together. The ideology of our leader, the late Balasaheb Thackeray, was against the Congress ideology, and he had even said that if it ever happened that the Sena moved towards the Congress, he would disband the party itself. But the opposite happened, and the Shiv Sena (UBT) formed a government with them, only with the aim of [Uddhav Thackeray] becoming Chief Minister, and solely for the purpose of fulfilling a personal ambition.

But your splitting the party has also elicited sympathy for Uddhav Thackeray...

Is betraying your party colleagues and abandoning your ideology going to elicit sympathy from the people? The way the Shiv Sena (UBT) completely gave up the ideology of Balasaheb Thackeray*ji*, to give up Hindutva, will this not be seen by the people as a betrayal? What is the Shiv Sena's ideology as enunciated by Balasaheb Thackeray*ji*? It is Hindutva, 80% social work, 20% politics, which has now been forgotten by the Shiv Sena (UBT), so how will they gain people's sympathy? People want development, and you [referring to Uddhav Thackeray] ran the government, or tried to, from home. Who will people vote for, those who work or those who sit at home?

It was suggested that the MVA would have more trouble finalising its list, but it is the *Mahayuti* list that has been delayed.

Only where the chances of victory are high, there are competitive claims. Our candidates are very good and we have good coordination among our allies. Look at the MVA; despite early declaration, there are many rebel candidates in different seats.

It appears that the addition of the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP-Ajit Pawar faction) has lessened the BJP's dependence on your party.

Look, we have an ideological alliance; the Shiv Sena and the BJP are both committed to the same ideals, and our alliance is more than a quarter century old. Ajit Pawar*ji* also saw Prime Minister Modi's work and came over to our side. There is something to be said for political adjustment, and Shiv Sena and BJP have no differences.

Mumbai is India's premier commercial city but the industry was spooked because of certain incidents such as the presence of a bomb outside a prominent industrialist's house. Has any outreach been made to improve the mood of the industry?

It is true. If bombs are placed outside the residence of an industrialist or a *morcha* is taken out against him/her, why would industrialists not fear to be here? But that was under the MVA government, and we have done much to restore the faith of industry as no one can dare to carry out such acts; law and order is restored; incentives are being given to industry. We have huge potential and connectivity for industry to thrive.

But Foxconn-Vedanta went out of Maharashtra under your regime...

That happened when we had barely been two months into government. You need more time than that to prepare. But in the past two years, we have signed MoUs worth ₹5 lakh crore in two [World Economic Forums in] Davos. Industry is coming to Maharashtra, as they have an assurance that they will be welcomed and treated well.

The knotty question of Maratha reservations hovers over the polls, with some in your alliance also worried that the OBC share of the pie may shrink if Marathas are given reservations.

As a government, I and both the Deputy Chief Ministers are committed to providing reservations for Marathas and we have cleared the way for 10% reservations by calling a special session of the Assembly as well. Now some people, who had never provided this reservation when they had the chance, and only did politics in the name of Marathas, have gone to court. We, on our part, have given the reservations and the courts have not granted any stay on that till now. This has all been done without hurting the interest of any other groups; we want the support of all groups – Maratha, OBC, SC/ST, Dhangar, minorities – who all live in Maharashtra.

Keeping on the topic of reservations, it's being said that the BJP's slogan of "400 *paar*" is raising fears that such a majority will be used to do away with reservations and therefore there is low polling as well.

This is all Opposition propaganda. Mr. Modi has made it very clear that reservations are here to stay. As for low polling, there is a heat wave on as well. Despite that, polling hasn't gone below 50% in any State so far. Rahul Gandhi is a fine one to talk of low polling when he takes off for cooler climes as soon as the heat hits.

Hindutva and caste calculations overtake issues of drought and backwardness in north Karnataka

Girish Pattanashetti
HUBBALLI

Under a scorching sun and amid a severe drought, 14 constituencies in northern and central Karnataka are going to the polls on May 7. Complaints about regional imbalances and unkept promises – especially related to irrigation projects – are an undercurrent, though constantly overshadowed by communal narratives and a blame game between parties in the last leg of the campaign.

The emergence of right-wing activism in the aftermath of the 1992 Idgah riots in Hubballi and the subsequent political realignment in the region, with members of the Janata Parivar shifting to the saffron party, has severely affected the Congress's prospects in the region. The party's efforts to regain its glory have not yielded big results yet.

In the 2004, 2009, and 2014 elections, the Congress never got more than three seats out of the total 14. Despite aligning with the Janata Dal(S) in 2019, the Congress was washed out in the region, with the BJP making a clean sweep. Under the changed political equations, the JD(S) has tied up with the BJP this time around, but is not contesting any seats in this region.

In the spotlight: Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge addressing a rally at Afzalpur in Kalaburagi district. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The BJP candidates are heavily dependent on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's popularity and, in certain pockets, the Hindutva agenda. The Congress is trying to minimise its effect by using its "new guarantee card" and highlighting the "meagre drought relief" from the Centre for which it had to approach the Supreme Court.

New names, old issues

North Karnataka was broadly categorised into Hyderabad Karnataka and Bombay (Mumbai) Karnataka, now renamed Kalyana Karnataka and Kittur Karnataka, respectively. The change in name has not changed the issues. For instance, out of 39 taluks across Karnataka identified as "most backward" by the D.M. Najundappa Committee report on regional imbalances, 26 are from north Karnataka. The situation in these taluks has not changed much. Important issues, such as the promise of making the Upper Krishna Project a national project, still remain a dream.

A host of national- and State-level leaders have addressed scores of rallies across this region, but very few have spoken about the debilitating drought and water scarcity that the region has been suffering from since the 2022 kharif season. Any debate on the lack of industries or other means of employment in north Karnataka, compared with the south, is also not to be heard.

The issues that are being raised instead, are the castes and sub-castes of candidates, the murder of student Neha Hiremath on a college campus in Hubballi, and the Bengaluru cafe blast case, used to speak of wider threats to national security. Over the past few days, though the JD(S) is not a big force to reckon with in most parts of north Karnataka, the alleged sex scandal involving party leader Prajwal Revanna has somewhat shifted focus from the Neha Hiremath murder.

Under pressure to make inroads into these constituencies which have remained with the BJP, the Congress has fielded many children and relatives of Ministers in this election.

Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge has taken on the task of getting his son-in-law Radhakrishan Doddamani elected from his home constituency of Kalaburagi.

Two ex-Chief Ministers – Jagadish Shettar and Basavaraj Bommai – are contesting Lok Sabha elections for the first time on BJP ticket. Union Minister Pralhad Joshi is striving for re-election and so are former Union Minister Ramesh Jigajinagi and P.C. Gaddigoudar, MP. Another former Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa is under pressure to get his son B.Y. Raghavendra elected, amid a rebellion by his one-time party colleague K.S. Eshwarappa.

(With inputs from Rishikesh Bahadur Desai and Kumar Buradikatti)

RJD leader rewinds PM's old speeches at poll rally

Amit Bhelari
PATNA

Rashtriya Janata Dal leader and former Deputy Chief Minister Tejashwi Yadav has taunted Prime Minister Narendra Modi by playing an audio clip of the PM's old speeches and the promises made during meetings in the past in Bihar.

Playing the recording in front of a large gathering during an election rally in Madhubani on Tuesday, Mr. Yadav asserted that a leader of high stature like the PM should not speak such lies in public life.

On Wednesday, Mr. Yadav posted a message on X saying: "Yesterday in the election meeting, a friend brought it to me. What is in it? You should also listen to it and make others listen. The public is now listening to it and telling others to listen to the promises made by the Prime Minister in the past 10 years. So many lies have been told and now it is hard to rearrange it."

INBRIEF

Shinde's Sena fields Shrikant Shinde from Kalyan LS seat

The Shiv Sena (Shinde faction) has fielded Shrikant Shinde, MP and Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde's son, from the Kalyan Lok Sabha constituency. The BJP had shown interest in the seat for former Minister Ganesh Naik or his son former MP Sanjeev Naik. Former Thane Mayor Naresh Mhaske has been nominated as the party's contender for the Thane seat against Rajan Vichare, MP, of the Shiv Sena (UBT). The party has fielded Hemanth Godse from Nashik. The announcement of Mr. Shrikant's nomination as a candidate of the *Mahayuti* was made last month by Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis.

Modi's photograph removed from CoWIN certificates

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's photo has been removed from CoWIN certificates issued for COVID-19 vaccinations. The certificates, issued by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, have long borne images of Mr. Modi, with a quote saying, "Together, India will defeat COVID-19." The quote remains, with an attribution to the Prime Minister, without his name. The removal was pointed out by social media users on Wednesday. Mr. Modi's photos were also summarily taken down from all government websites when the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) came into force ahead of the election.

Trinamool removes Kunal Ghosh from key party post

The Trinamool Congress on Wednesday removed Kunal Ghosh from the post of general secretary, hours after he was seen sharing the stage with the BJP's Kolkata North candidate, Tapas Roy, at an apolitical event in the city. "Kunal Ghosh has been expressing views that don't align with the party... Mr. Ghosh was previously relieved from his role as party spokesperson. Now he has been removed from the position of general secretary of the State organisation," the party said in a statement. The statement, signed by Rajya Sabha member Derek O'Brien, asked media outlets not to conflate Mr. Ghosh's views with those of the party, and warned that such actions might invite legal action.

Salman house firing: accused dies after attempt to end life

A 32-year-old man arrested in connection with the firing outside Bollywood actor Salman Khan's house in Mumbai, died in a hospital where he was rushed to after attempting to end his life inside the toilet of the lock-up of Mumbai Police's Crime Branch on Wednesday afternoon. The accused, Anuj Thapan, was declared dead at the State-run Gokuldas Tejpal Hospital during treatment, the police said. Thapan's body was sent to State-run JJ Hospital for in-camera post-mortem. The State's CID has taken over the probe into the death. (*Those in distress may contact Sanjivini, Society for Mental Health suicide prevention helpline: 011-40769002)*

PM throws challenge at Cong. for its stand on Muslim quota

Modi launches LS campaign in his home State of Gujarat; tells public 'if you have two buffaloes, Congress will take away one if voted to power' in reference to alleged proposal of inheritance tax

The Hindu Bureau
GANDHINAGAR

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday asked the Congress to give in writing to the people of the country that it would not introduce religion-based reservations. He also asked the grand old party to take a pledge that it would not try to change the Constitution.

Mr. Modi slammed the Opposition party for the idea of "imposing inheritance tax", and told people at an election rally in Gujarat's Banaskantha that "if you have two buffaloes, Congress will take away one if voted to power".

"This is my challenge to the Congress *shehzada* (prince, a reference to Rahul Gandhi), his party, and supporters. If they have the courage, let them announce and give it in writing that they will never offer reservations based on religion. They should pledge to not tamper with the Constitution," the PM said as he launched his electoral campaign in his home State of Gujarat on the State's foundation day.

On home turf: Prime Minister Narendra Modi waves to people at an election rally in Himmatnagar, Gujarat on Wednesday. VIJAY SONEJI

Dairy farming mainstay

Mr. Modi launched the campaign from Banaskantha where Congress candidate Geniben Thakor has been targeting the Banas Dairy and its chairman and BJP leader Shankar Chaudhary, whose protege Rekha Chaudhary is the BJP candidate from the north Gujarat seat where dairy farming as a livelihood is a mainstay for rural farmers.

The PM addressed two rallies – at Deesa in Banaskantha, and at Himatnagar in Sabarkantha, a neighbouring district, where dairy farming is also a major source of income and livelihood for rural communities.

"Recently, a Congress leader from abroad (referring to Sam Pitroda) suggested a proposal where more than half of your inheritance will be taken away from you and given to the government. A 55% inheritance tax will be imposed. For example, if you have 10 acres of land and you want to hand it over to your children; half of it will be taken over by the government. Similarly, if you have two buffaloes and want to leave them for your children, one will be taken away by the government if Congress is voted to power," he said, continuing his vitriolic attack on the Opposition party.

He repeated his charges against the Congress regarding spreading fake videos to target the BJP government, its plans to allow religion-based quota and curtailing the existing reservation for SCs, STs and OBCs and how its government was timid in fighting terrorism. Mr. Modi also said that as long as he was alive, he would not allow religion-based quotas in the country. "The party which ruled the country for 60 years has become a fake factory," Modi said.

Decision on Amethi, Rae Bareli candidates in 24 hours: Congress

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Maintaining suspense over their candidates for the Amethi and Rae Bareli Lok Sabha seats in Uttar Pradesh, Congress general secretary (communication) Jairam Ramesh on Wednesday said party president Mallikarjun Kharge would finalise the candidates for the two seats, and a decision would be in place in 24 hours.

"The Congress Election Committee empowered Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge to decide the candidates for Amethi and Rae Bareli and he will take the decision soon. You will know in the next 24 hours," Mr. Ramesh said at a press conference in Delhi.

On why there was a delay in taking a decision and if the Congress was "scared" of fielding former Congress president Rahul Gandhi and general secretary Priyanka Gandhi from those seats, Mr. Ramesh said: "There is no delay. Has the BJP announced its candidates in Rae Bareli? Smriti Irani is a sitting MP. Nobody is scared, discussions are ongoing. There is no delay. There is time till May 3."

Mr. Gandhi had earlier said that he would follow "whatever order" he got from the party.

At its April 27 meeting, the Central Election Committee, heeding the suggestion of the party's Uttar Pradesh unit, strongly urged the Gandhi siblings to contest from the two seats, though it left the final decision to Mr. Kharge.

May 3 is the last day for filing nominations for the two seats that go to the polls in the fifth phase of the Lok Sabha election on May 20.

Various conclusions are being reached based on Mr. Gandhi and Ms. Vadra's schedule for the next two days. On May 3, Mr. Gandhi is scheduled to address a rally in Pune.

In 2019, Mr. Gandhi lost the Amethi seat that he had been representing for 15 years to Ms. Irani, who filed her nomination papers on Monday. Mr. Gandhi is also in the race from Wayanad, which went to the polls on April 26.

EC bars KCR from campaigning for 48 hours over speech

M. Rajeev
HYDERABAD

The Election Commission (EC) has barred Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) president K. Chandrashekhar Rao from holding any public meetings, rallies, shows, and interviews as well as making "public utterances" in print, electronic, and social media for a period of 48 hours starting 8 p.m. on Wednesday.

The EC strongly condemned the statement made by him at a press conference in Sircilla on April 5 and reprimanded the BRS president for his misconduct. Accordingly, it barred Mr. Rao from holding public meetings and other election-related activities under Article 324 of the Constitution.

The poll body referred to a complaint filed by Congress State vice-president G. Niranjan, alleging that the BRS president violated the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) by making derogatory and objectionable comments against the party. It quoted Mr. Rao abusing Congress leaders.

K. Chandrashekhar Rao

The Commission said the MCC provides that "criticism of other political parties, when made, shall be confined to their policies and programme, past record and work. Parties and candidates shall refrain from criticism of all aspects of private life, not connected with public activities of the leaders or workers of other parties. Criticism of other parties and their workers based on unverified allegations or distortion shall be avoided."

EC brings out protocol on symbol loading units as mandated by top court

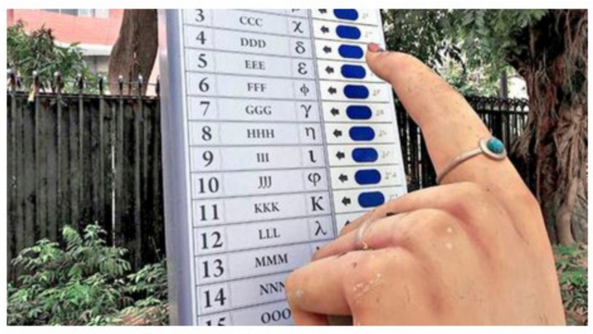
The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Election Commission (EC) on Wednesday brought out a detailed protocol for the handling and storage of symbol loading units (SLU) in compliance with the Supreme Court's order of April 26.

The top court issued directions to seal and store the SLUs in a container, and store them in a strongroom along with the electronic voting machines (EVMs) for at least 45 days after the declaration of results.

The SLU uploads the name and symbol of the candidates contesting a particular seat on Voter Verified Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) or paper trail machines.

The SLUs had till now been handed over to local election officials by engineers of Bharat Electronics Ltd. (BEL) or the EC before voting. A day after the polls, the SLUs used to be returned to the engineers of the two public sector undertakings that manufacture the ballot unit, the control unit, and the VVPAT, along with the SLUs.



A model of an electronic voting machine is displayed outside the Election Commission office n New Delhi on April 15. REUTERS

The EC, in a statement on Wednesday, said that it had directed all State Chief Electoral Officers to create the necessary infrastructure for the handling and storage of the SLUs in the EVMs in accordance with the new protocols being implemented from May 1 as mandated by the SC.

"Enough number of SLU containers, generally two to four per Assembly constituency, are to be kept ready in advance based on the requirements," the EC said.

The revised protocols are applicable in all cases of completion of the symbol loading process in VVPATs undertaken on or after May 1. The top court had also paved the way for verification of micro-controllers embedded in the EVMs.

BJP's efforts to tamper with Constitution not new: Cong.

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Flagging a November 1949 edition of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS)-linked publication *Organiser*, which while critiquing the Constitution lamented that it ignored Indian legal texts such as the *Manusmriti,* the Congress on Wednesday said the BJP's efforts to tamper with the Constitution were not new.

The party also asked Prime Minister Narendra Modi to clear his stance on whether he would remove the 50% cap on reservation for the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes, and the Other Backward Classes.

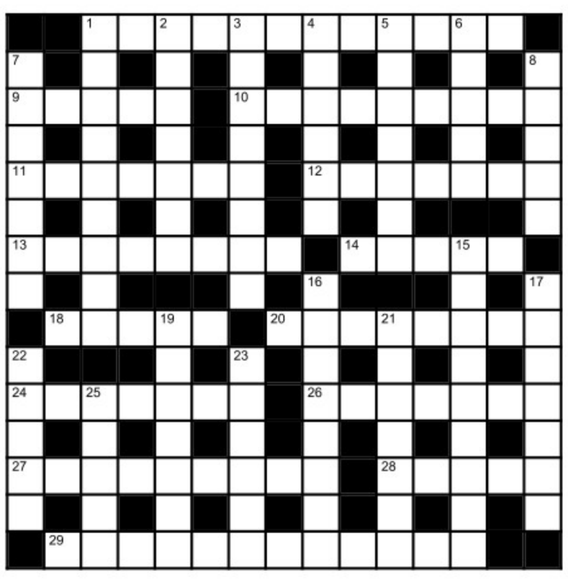
Congress leader Rahul Gandhi urged all party candidates to carry a copy of the Constitution with them while filing nomination papers, and at public meetings and outreach programmes. Mr. Gandhi has been carrying a copy with him while addressing election rallies.

TH CROSSWORD + 14164

(set by Karaoke)

To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site. @ *https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn*

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

1 Thrash key cop brutally. It's a way of treating cases (5,7)
9 Maybe solution from volume cooked up, volume destroyed (5)
10 Money stolen by missing person, who denies food and drinks (9)
11 Iron men? On the contrary (7)
12 Well-known Indian man stops for drug on the way (7)
13 Crush of Arkansas and Wichita (8)
14 Wearing wool gives recurring protection for Inuits (5)
18 Revolutionary practice at a place for athletic abilities gets an expression of awe (2,3)
20 Star-shaped satellite crashed after loss of essential engines (8)
24 Briefly think about appeal in public performance (7)
26 Mineral from extremely rare seaweed, close to Mercur (7)
27 Drunken cine-goer obstructed by first-class gatekeeper (9)
28 Greeting word used to express irritation and trouble (5)
29 Which event a marathoner will participate finally? (2,3,4,3)

Down

1 Say why some need working capital? (4,5)
2 How small is small to derive properties of power (4,3)
3 Spooner says 'Idiot, hang bag' (8)
4 Bed and breakfast in Lesotho mostly in a mess (6)
5 Breaking into an association of criminals getting funding (7)
6 Quiet sound when it is fired (5)
7 Curling shark? (7)
8 Government regulation drops basic duty (5)
15 Oscar hunted to remove the contents of an animal (5-4)
16 Doctor! Nurse got bony fish (8)
17 Wants to protect the world in digital shield primarily (7)
19 Some almost-richest person who ignores unpleasant facts (7)
21 Take advance in rent from that woman with kid (7)
22 I hear small creature's smut (4)
23 Extremely fateful test relating to baby's breath, say (6)
25 Field gun killed national minister (5)

SUDOKU

		7	1					
1		5	9	2				
3	9			8				
2	1	3						8
	7		3		8		6	
6						4	3	7
				3			7	1
				7	1	5		3
					4	2		

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DIFFICULTY RATING: ★☆☆☆☆

Solution to previous puzzle

F	O	R	E	H	A	N	D		S	C	U	L	P	T
L		I		A		E			A		I		A	
U	P	S	U	R	G	E		T	O	P	S	P	I	N
C		I		N		D		E		E		R		K
T	A	B	L	E		L	I	N	E	S	M	E	N	
U		L		S		E		N				A		
A	T	E	A	S	E		M	I	S	J	U	D	G	E
N				E		P		S		E				S
T	H	E	U	S	U	A	L		S	T	U	M	P	S
		X				D		M		L		O		A
	S	T	U	P	I	D	L	Y		A	N	N	O	Y
I		O		O		L		O		G		S		I
S	E	R	V	I	C	E		P	I	G	E	O	N	S
L		T		N				I		E		O		T
E	R	S	A	T	Z		L	A	N	D	I	N	G	S

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

4	8	3	9	2	7	6	5	1
1	5	2	8	6	3	7	4	9
9	6	7	5	4	1	2	8	3
8	2	4	6	3	9	1	7	5
7	1	9	2	8	5	4	3	6
5	3	6	1	7	4	9	2	8
6	4	5	7	9	8	3	1	2
2	7	1	3	5	6	8	9	4
3	9	8	4	1	2	5	6	7

FAITH

Rama lists duties of a king

Rama offered advice to Bharata about the duties of a king, said Navalpakkam Vasudevachariar in a discourse. Rama hopes Bharata consults his council of ministers before making a decision. Once a decision has been made, Bharata must ensure that the details of the discussions do not reach the ears of other kings. Caution should be exercised when a king employs people. They should be wise, because the unwise will be a burden on a king. Good performers must be in high positions. Ministers must be incorruptible.

The army chief must have the trust and affection of soldiers who serve under his command. Those in the army must be paid sufficiently and in time. Those selected as ambassadors must be eloquent, must have presence of mind, and must be precise in their speech. Rama warns Bharata to never underestimate a foe. An enemy may be defeated in a battle, but he may bounce back and pose a threat to Ayodhya. Those who pretend to be scholars and confuse people must never be honoured. A king's duty does not end with keeping his citizens comfortable. He must check whether animals are doing well too, whether it is horses, or wild animals like elephants. Rama hopes that Ayodhya, which had always flourished under the rule of the Ikshvaku clan, continues to be prosperous.

INBRIEF

Coal India production rose 7% to 61.8 MT in April

State-owned Coal India Ltd. (CIL) on Wednesday said its production increased 7.3% to 61.8 million tonnes in April. The company had produced 57.6 million tonnes of coal in the corresponding month of the previous fiscal, CIL said in a filing with the BSE. CIL accounts for more than 80% of domestic coal production. The company's coal offtake also registered a rise of 3.2% to 64.3 million tonnes last month, from 62.3 million tonnes in the year-earlier period. PTI

SEBI makes nomination optional for joint MF accounts

Capital markets regulator SEBI on Wednesday made the nomination optional for jointly-held mutual fund (MF) accounts to promote ease of doing business. Additionally, SEBI allowed fund houses to have a single fund manager to oversee commodity and foreign investments. This would reduce the cost of managing the fund. These came after a working group constituted by SEBI reviewed MF regulations and recommended measures to promote ease of doing business. PTI

'FPIs withdrew ₹8,700 crore from Indian equities in April'

Foreign investors turned net sellers in April, selling Indian equities worth almost ₹8,700 crore on concerns over a tweak in India's tax treaty with Mauritius and amid a sustained rise in U.S. bond yields. This followed a staggering net investment of ₹35,098 crore in March and ₹1,539 crore in February. The total inflow for 2024 so far stood at ₹2,222 crore in equities and ₹44,908 crore in debt. Net FPI outflows in equities was ₹8,671 crore, data with depositories showed. PTI

DGCA deregisters all 54 Go First aircraft

The loss-making airline's aircraft lessors had moved the Delhi High Court in the wake of the NCLT admitting Go First's plea to seek voluntary insolvency in May last year and the resultant moratorium on adverse actions by the carrier's creditors; HC last week gave regulator 5 days to act

Jagriti Chandra
NEW DELHI

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on Wednesday deregistered all 54 Go First aircraft following a Delhi High Court order last week, in which the court had given the country's aviation regulator five days to do so.

"All 54 aircraft... have been deregistered," a senior DGCA official said.

A total of 14 aircraft lessors including SMBC Aviation Capital Limited, Sky Leasing, GY Aviation Lease, ACG Aircraft Leasing, BOC Aviation and China Development Bank Financial Leasing Company had moved the Delhi High Court last year seeking to regain control over the airline's fleet of leased planes. This had followed the National Company Law Tribunal's decision on May 10, 2023, to admit Go First's plea for voluntary insolvency and the consequential moratorium to protect the airline from adverse actions by its creditors.

Allows maintenance

Last week, the Delhi High Court directed the DGCA to "forthwith and no later than the next five working days process the Deregistration Applications", as well as facilitate their "export by providing an Export Certificate of Airworthiness, a Ferry Flight Permit and all other documents and permissions as the Petitioners/Lessors may require". The court had also allowed lessors to inspect the aircraft and undertake maintenance of the planes.

Industry officials said while the court had asked the Airports Authority of India to inform the DGCA of the parking charges owed, it was not clear whether these dues would have to be paid by the lessors or the Resolution Professional overseeing Go Air's affairs during the insolvency process.

Some said lessors were liable only for airport dues for three months preceding the filing of the insolvency plea as per the aeronautical information circular. The aircraft were also not expected to fly out soon, as at least half of them had engine issues at the time Go First had halted operations, adding that lessors had had very limited visibility into the maintenance status of these planes since then, the officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity, added.

Wednesday's development marks exactly 365 days since Go First on May 2, 2023, announced it was filing for voluntary insolvency because of its dispute with Pratt and Whitney over the grounding of almost half of its fleet.

End of the runway

DGCA deregisters all 54 planes in Go Air's fleet after Delhi High Court orders regulator to act following a plea by aircraft lessors

- Lessors including SMBC Aviation Capital, ACG Aircraft Leasing and China Development Bank Financial Leasing moved court
- HC allowed lessors to inspect the planes and undertake maintenance of their aircraft
- Uncertainty over who will bear the parking charges owed to Airports Authority of India

'Maruti Suzuki's total sales rose 5% to 1.68 lakh units in April'

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Automaker Maruti Suzuki India (MSI) on Wednesday reported a 4.7% increase in total sales at 1,68,089 units in April. The company had dispatched a total of 1,60,529 units to its dealers in the same month last year, MSI said in a statement.

Total domestic passenger vehicle sales were 1,37,952 units compared with 1,37,320 units in the year-earlier period, the carmaker added.

Sales of mini segment cars comprising Alto and S-Presso, declined to 11,519 units as against 14,110 units in April 2023.

Sales of compact cars, including Baleno, Celerio, Dzire, Ignis, Swift, Tour S and WagonR, also fell to 56,953 units last month over 74,935 units in the year-earlier month.

Utility vehicles, consisting of Brezza, Ertiga, S-Cross and XL6, clocked a sales of 56,553 units last month from 36,754 units earlier.

Sales of vans were 12,060 units in April as against 10,504 units a year earlier, while that of light commercial vehicle Super Carry stood at 2,496 units from 2,199 units in April 2023.

MSI said its exports last month stood at 22,160 units compared with 16,971 units in the same month last year.

Tata Motors sales rise

Tata Motors on Wednesday said its total wholesales rose 11.5% year-on-year to 77,521 units last month as compared with 69,599 units in April 2023.

U.S. Fed holds interest rates citing 'uncertain economic outlook'

Agence France-Presse
WASHINGTON

'The economic outlook is uncertain, the FOMC remains highly attentive to inflation risks'

The U.S. Federal Reserve held interest rates steady for a sixth straight meeting on Wednesday, keeping the level at a 23-year high to fight stubborn price increases.

At the end of a two-day meeting, policymakers decided unanimously to keep the benchmark lending rate unchanged at 5.25-5.50%, citing a "lack of further progress" towards its 2% inflation target.

"The economic outlook is uncertain, and the Committee remains highly attentive to inflation risks," the Fed said in a statement.

The Fed also announced on Wednesday that, starting in June, it would slow the pace of decline of its securities holdings, by "reducing the monthly redemption cap on Treasury securities from $60 billion to $25 billion."

April petrol sales rises 12%, diesel slips 2%

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

India's petrol consumption soared 12.3% in April, but diesel sales continued to slide (by 2.3%) despite India entering hectic electioneering for general elections, preliminary data of state-owned firms showed.

Correction

The headline for a story on core sector output (May 1, 2024) erroneously said output 'slid 5.2% in March'. It should have read 'Core sectors' growth slid to 5.2% in March'.

Ambuja Cements posts Q4 net of ₹1,525.78 cr.

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Adani Group firm Ambuja Cements Ltd. on Wednesday reported consolidated net profit of ₹1,525.78 crore for the fourth quarter ended March.

The company had clocked a net profit of ₹763.30 crore in the January-March quarter a year earlier, the company said.

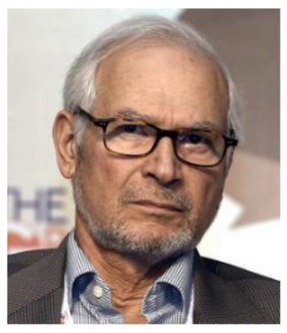
According to Ambuja Cements, the consolidated results for the quarter and the financial year ended March include the financial results of Sanghi Industries, which was acquired by the Adani Group firm last quarter. Hence, the results 'are not comparable.'

Godrej firms to continue working on Vikhroli land development post split

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Firms of the two groups that have been proposed to be formed post the split of the Godrej Group would continue to work together to execute development projects at Vikhroli, a Mumbai suburb, where Godrej & Boyce (G&B), the entity controlled by Jamshyd Godrej, owns 3,000 acres of land.

"Future development of Vikhroli presents a unique opportunity to create a holistic space in the metropolis of Mumbai where urban development and biodiversity co-exists harmoniously," said Mr. Godrej, CMD, (G&B). "Godrej Construction and Godrej Properties bring complementary strengths, and this has translated into the launch of successful real estate projects in Vikhroli," the G&B CMD added.



Jamshyd Godrej

Godrej Construction is a member of the G&B Group, which will hereafter be known as Godrej Enterprises Group (GEG), while Godrej Properties will be a group company of Godrej Industries Group (GIG) to be controlled Nadir and Adi Godrej.

Late Tuesday night the Godrej family announced an ownership realignment in the group companies. GEG will comprise G&B and affiliates, with presence in aerospace, aviation, defence, and motors. GIG will comprise five listed firms including Godrej Consumer Products.

IndusInd Bank — INDUSIND BANK LTD.
1-10-72, 3rd floor, Ashoka Janardhana Chambers, Begumpet, Hyderabad - 500016, Ph: (040) 40916229

E-AUCTION SALE PROCLAMATION NOTICE UNDER SARFAESI ACT 2002

Sale of immovable asset under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (hereinafter referred to as the Act).

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and to the Borrower/s and Guarantor/s in particular that the under mentioned property is mortgaged / charged to the secured creditor, being IndusInd Bank Limited, the possession of under mentioned property had been taken by the Authorised Officer of the IndusInd Bank Limited under S. 13(4) of the Act will be sold by E- Auction as mentioned below for recovery of under mentioned dues and applicable interest, charges and costs etc. as detailed below.

The property described below is being sold on **"As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is"** under the rule no. 8 & 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules (hereinafter referred to as the rules) for the recovery of the dues detailed as under:

Name of Borrower : M/s. Patil Trading Co, Rep. By its Proprietor, Co-Borrowers/Guarantors: 1) Mr. Sunil Prakash Patil,2) Mrs. Daneshwari S Patil

Total Amount Due as on 31-03-2024 : Rs. 49,65,874.00 (Rupees Forty Nine Lakhs Sixty Five Thousand Eight Hundred Seventy Four Only)

Nature of Possession	Under possession
Date & Time of Auction	14/05/2024,11:00AM to 12:00 PM
Reserve Price	Rs.34,50,000/- (Rupees Thirty Four Lakhs Fifty Thousand Only)
EMD	Rs.3,45,000/- (Rupees Three Lakhs Forty Five Thousand only) RTGS/NEFT/Fund Transfer to the credit of "IndusInd Bank Ltd", Account No. 00083564604005
Bid Increment	Rs.50,000/- (Rupees Fifty Thousand only)
Mode of Auction	E-AUCTON

Description of secured asset : All that piece and parcel of the apartment/Flat bearing No.401, 4th floor with a super built area of about 1366 and 341sq.ft of undivided right , title and interest in the entire property bearing No.15, Rajeshwarinagar, Laggere village Katha No.131/1, presently under Dasarahalli CMC having its present katha no.213, of Laggere main road, Laggere, Yeshwanthapura Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk, Bangalore-560058, measuring East to West : 50 feet, North to South 60-0 feet totally measuring 3000 square feet, along with one covered car parking.

Date of Inspection : 08/05/2024 between 11:00 AM to 01:00 PM. Please contact Mr. Jansi Rao 9886090570, Mr. Vishal Rajvansh 7903439576 Authorised Officer Mr. Varadaraj Mob: 9966078652 vardaraj.devaraj@indusind.com.

Last Date of Submission of bids (E-auction) : 13/05/2024 up to 04:00 PM

This publication is also a Fifteen Days (15) notice to the aforementioned borrower/guarantors under Rule 8(6) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in Secured Creditors Website i.e, **https://www.indusindbank.com**, regarding E-Auction/sale of respective property and other details before submitting their bids for taking part in the E –Auction. Bidders may also visit the website **https://www.bankeauctions.com.**

Date: 24-04-2024, Place : Bangalore — Sd/- Authorised Officer, Indusind Bank Limited

IDBI BANK
CIN: L65190MH2004GOI148838

आई.डी.बी.आई बैंक लिमिटेड, एन.पी.ए प्रबंधन समूह
IDBI BANK LIMITED,
NPA Management Group, No.5-9-89 / 1 & 2, 2nd floor, Chapel Road, Hyderabad – 500001
www.idbibank.in

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform all the concerned and general public that IDBI Bank Limited, 5-9-89/1&2, Chapel Road, Hyderabad – 500 001 had sanctioned Credit Facilities to Coastal Projects Limited, having its Corporate Office at Plot No.304, Road No.78, Film Nagar, Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad – 500033. The said loans were additionally secured by mortgage of property belonging to Shri D J Nagaraja, S/o. Shri D P Jayarama Reddy, details of which are given in the schedule detailed hereunder. As the said Company defaulted in repayments, IDBI Bank has initiated legal proceedings through its Authorised Officer and has taken possession of the scheduled property on March 09, 2018 under the provisions of SARFAESI Act 2002 for recovery of debt dues and to enforce the security by selling the mortgaged scheduled property. Possession notice was published in newspapers on March 15, 2018. Subsequently, one more public notice was published on December 04, 2018 cautioning the general public to desist from entering into any transactions with respect to scheduled property. It is noticed that mortgagor Shri D J Nagaraja illegally alienated the mortgaged property. Hence the property is under litigations at various courts in India. Public are hereby cautioned not to deal with any of the properties in the Survey Numbers as detailed below.

SCHEDULE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of land owned by Shri D J Nagaraja S/o. Shri D P Jayarama Reddy, comprised in various Survey Nos. and extent of land situated at Kariobanahali Village, Yeshwanthpur Hobli, Bengaluru North Taluk in the State of Karnataka and bounded as follows:

Sy. No.	Extent Ac-Guntas	Boundaries	
11/2	2-10	East	: Remaining Lands in Sy. No.11 of Narayana
		West	: P M Kempaiah's Land in Sy. No.3
		North	: Eerappa's Lands of the same Sy. No.
		South	: Thakur Sing's Lands.
11	1-20	East	: Lands of Dasappa and Others. Now sold to Narayana.
		West	: Remaining Lands in Sy. No. 11
		North	: Government Road
		South	: Lands of the same Sy. No. belonging to Narayana
13	3-00	East	: Lands in Sy. No.10
		West	: Sy. No.104
		North	: Lands 22
		South	: Remaining Lands in Sy. No.13
12/1	1-12	East	: Lands of K Veeranna
		West	: Lands of Patel Mahadevappa
		North	: Sadashivaiah's Lands
		South	: Honnappa's Lands
21/2	1-05	East	: Lands of Gangarasaiah
		West	: Lands Paranna and others now belonging to Nagaraj
		North	: Lands of Puttaiah
		South	: Mariyappa's Lands
21/2	1-00	East	: Lands of Doddananjappa and others. Now purchased by Nagaraj.
		West	: Lands of Nagaraj purchased from Malleshaiah and others.
		North	: Lands of Puttaiah
		South	: Lands of Gangarasaiah

together with buildings and structures constructed/ to be constructed thereon along with fixtures and fittings attached to the earth/ anything attached to the earth.

Date: 30.04.2024

Yours faithfully,
N. Subrahmanyam, DGM

PUBLIC NOTICE

My client Smt. Jayashree Ramamoorthy, W/o. Sri. Ramamoorthy, is intending to purchase the schedule property mentioned hereunder for a valuable consideration from its owners 1) Mrs. Waheeda Banu, W/o. Late. Syed Ajmal Pasha and her children viz., 1. a)Ms. Umme Aiyman Ajmal, 1. b) Ms. Umme Rumana Ajmal & 1. c) Mr. Syed Guffran Pasha, all are residing at No. 17, 19th Cross, 20th Main, behind Bohra Masjid, SMS Layout, J. P. Nagar, 5th Phase, Bangalroe-78, 2) Mrs. Siddiqa Banu W/o. Late. Syed Alsam Pasha, and her children viz., 2.a) Mr. Syed layan Pasha & 2.b) Ms. Samreen Taj, all are residing at No. 21, 2nd Cross, Vinayaka Nagar, J. P. Nagar, 5th Phase, Near Rizwan Masjid, Bangalroe-78.

If any persons and concerned authorities having any claims, right, title and interest whatsoever over the schedule property may forward their objections to the undersigned in writing with supporting documents of your such claims, within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. Failing which it will be deemed that there are no claims, right, title and interest by anybody and my client will proceed for completion of sale transaction and thereafter no claims will be considered.

SCHEDULE

Residential Apartment Flat No. 302, 1200 Sq. Ft. SBA in the 3rd floor, project with one covered Car Parking in the Basement Floor with UDS 240 Sq. Ft. constructed on plot No. 23 Situated at Tayappana Halli, earlier 39th Cross, Now 39th "A" Cross, Bangalore, 11th Main Road, Muniswamy Raju Layout, 4th "T" Block, Jayanagar, Corporation Ward No. 168, Bangalore and bounded on:
East by : Site No. 24, West by : Road,
North by : Site No. 13, South by : Road

MANJUNATHA & ASSOCIATES
K. N. MANJUNATHA CHARY, ROOPA. B, & B.N. JAGADISH KUMAR, Advocates, # 96, 1st Floor, 1st Main, 4th Cross, Maruthi Nagar, Madiwala, Bangalore- 68, Mob: 9845965626, 7406090832

Bangalore, Date : 02-05-2024

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby informed to the public that my client Sri. Sendil Kumar Y. has lost the Original Sale Deeds (1) Doc. No. 2734/1990-91 dated 25.03.1991 (2) Doc No. 1125/1997-98, dated 11.09.1997 registered in office of Sub-Registrar Hoskote, while Transit at Samethanahalli between 3.00pm to 3.30p.m. on 27.04.2024. The said documents were related to Residential Site No. 22, Property No.150300402500521657 & 185/191/22/144/289 formed in Sy.No.19, Situated at Samethanahalli Village, Anugondanahalli Hobli, Hosakote Taluk, Bangalore Rural District Measuring East to West 40 feet and North to South 30 feet, totally measuring 1,200 Sq.ft.

If any person/s who finds it, is requested to return the same to us at below mention address:

Subrahmanya Hegde, Advocate,
ANANDA & HEGDE LAW ASSOCIATES,
#76-77, Krishna Krupa Building, Ground Floor, 2nd Main Road, Sheshadripuram, Bangalore-20.
Mob: 9060069259.

'India one of key geographies affected by phishing attacks'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

India is one of the key countries affected by phishing attacks, where employees often click on malicious links or attachments that appear to be from legitimate sources, often leading to severe financial losses, reported Verizon Business, a New Jersey-based provider of cybersecurity solutions and products.

However, Verizon Business said, there was a silver lining as far as India was concerned as reporting practices have improved, with 20% of users now identifying and reporting phishing during simulation tests. This was only the first stepping stone, as enterprises can significantly reduce human error in cybersecurity by adopting a multi-pronged approach.

The company also said in its 2024 Data Breach Investigations Report that espionage attacks dominate APAC's cybersecurity landscape, including that of India. Some 25% of APAC cyberattacks are motivated by espionage, significantly greater than the 6% and % in Europe and North America, respectively, and the region experienced a 180% growth in vulnerability exploitation.

On an average, it took organisations surveyed about 55 days to patch 50% of their critical vulnerabilities and the non-malicious human element was involved in more than two-thirds of these breaches.

The report, was prepared after analysing 30,458 security incidents and 10,626 confirmed breaches in 2023 (two-fold increase over 2022) in the APAC region. System intrusion, social engineering, and basic web-application attacks represent 95% of the breaches in APAC.

Adani Energy Solutions Q4 net profit falls 13% to ₹381 cr.

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Adani Energy Solutions Ltd. (AESL) has reported a 13.26% decline in its consolidated net profit to ₹381.29 crore during January-March 2024 on account of increased expenses.

Net profit after tax was at ₹439.60 crore in the January-March period of the preceding 2022-23 financial year, the company said in an exchange filing on Tuesday.

For the whole financial year (FY24), the company's net profit stood at ₹1,195.61 crore, down from ₹1,280.60 crore registered in FY23.

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A BG-BGE

LONDON

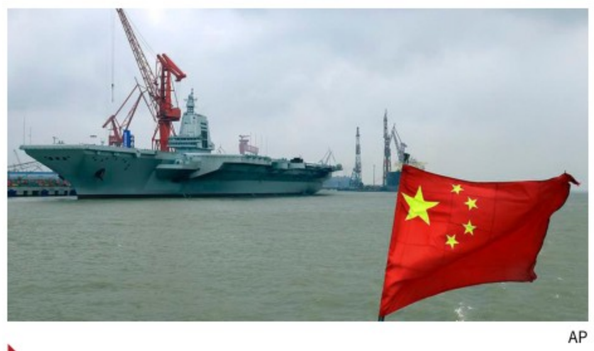
17-year-old held as 'broken glass' attack injures duo at U.K. school

AP

A 17-year-old boy was arrested on Wednesday after three persons including a child were attacked with a "sharp object believed to be broken glass" at a school in northern England, police said. The attack came days after a similar incident in Wales. Two adults suffered minor injuries but did not require hospital treatment. AFP

BEIJING

China's third aircraft carrier *Fujian* conducts first sea trials

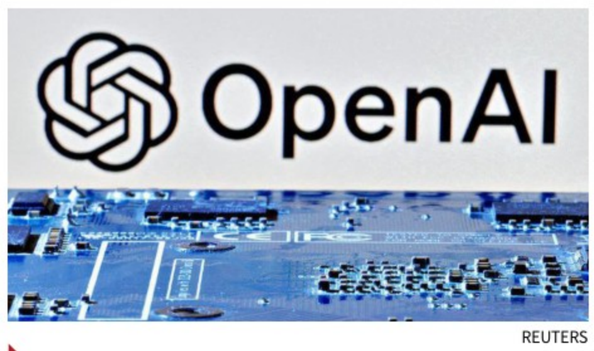


AP

China's *Fujian* aircraft carrier held maiden sea trials on Wednesday, a key next step in a vast naval build-up by Beijing as it carves out a more assertive role for itself in the Pacific and beyond. The *Fujian* is China's third aircraft carrier after the *Liaoning* and the *Shandong* vessels and is the Chinese navy's largest-ever ship. AFP

SAN FRANCISCO

U.S. newspapers sue OpenAI, Microsoft over AI chatbots



REUTERS

Eight U.S. newspapers sued OpenAI and Microsoft in a New York federal court for violating their copyright to train the technology behind ChatGPT and Copilot chatbots. The papers, which include The New York Daily News and The Chicago Tribune, are owned by Alden Global Capital, a Florida-based investment firm. AFP

NEW YORK

U.S. novelist Paul Auster, known for 'The New York Trilogy' dies at 77

REUTERS

Paul Auster, 77, the prolific American novelist whose works included 'The New York Trilogy,' has died of complications from lung cancer. Auster died on Tuesday at his home in Brooklyn. He made his name with noirish, existentialist novels about lonely writers, outsiders and down-and-outers that were a hit in Europe particularly. AFP

In Israel, Blinken asks Hamas to accept 'very strong' deal

The Secretary of State reiterates U.S. opposition to Israel PM's Rafah invasion plans as he meets Netanyahu and Opposition leader Yair Lapid; we will not rest until everyone is back home, he says

Agence France-Presse
TEL AVIV

Reassurance: Antony Blinken meets families of hostages kidnapped in the October 7 attack, in Tel Aviv on Wednesday. AFP

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken called upon Hamas on Wednesday to accept a "very strong" ceasefire-for-hostages offer as he vowed to put a priority on families seeking to reunite with loved ones.

In rare scenes for the top U.S. diplomat, who has faced furore at home and abroad over President Joe Biden's support for Israel in its campaign against Hamas, Mr. Blinken was greeted outside his Tel Aviv hotel by Israelis waving U.S. flags and chanting, "Thank you, Biden! Thank you, Blinken!"

Mr. Blinken, who also met privately with hostage families, told them that freeing the hostages seized by militants on October 7 was "at the heart of everything we do".

"There is a very strong proposal on the table right now. Hamas needs to say yes, and needs to get this done," Mr. Blinken told the protesters, many of whom chanted for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to halt the war.

"We will not rest until everyone – men, women, soldier, civilian, young, old – is back home," he said.

Following a meeting with Mr. Blinken, Israel's Opposition leader Yair Lapid insisted that Mr. Netanyahu "does not have any political excuse not to move to a deal for the release of the hostages".

"He has a majority in the nation, he has a majority in the Knesset, and if needed, I'll make sure he has a majority in the government," he said on X, formerly Twitter.

Various members of Mr. Netanyahu's coalition government, including those from the far-right, have criticised the negotiations, throwing doubt on the government's unity.

Ceasefire 'now'

In Jerusalem on Wednesday, Mr. Blinken spoke at length with Mr. Netanyahu, who despite calls for a ceasefire has been vowing to go ahead with an offensive in Rafah – the city in southern Gaza where around 1.5 million Palestinians have taken shelter – regardless of U.S. opposition or the fate of hostage negotiations.

In that discussion, Mr. Blinken reiterated the U.S. opposition to a Rafah incursion, a U.S. official said.

Speaking earlier with Israeli President Isaac Herzog, Mr. Blinken said the U.S. was "determined to get a ceasefire that brings the hostages home – and to get it now".

'Australia has laws to deal with foreign interference'

Kallol Bhattacherjee
NEW DELHI

Penny Wong

Australia will uphold its democratic values in the face of "foreign interference", Foreign Minister Penny Wong said on Wednesday in response to a question on reports that India at one point in the recent past had a "nest of spies" on Australian soil. The response came after the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) had earlier reported that Indian "spies" were "kicked out" after they were "caught trying to steal secrets about sensitive defence projects and airport security".

"[...]You would be unsurprised to hear me respond that we don't comment on intelligence matters. But at a level of principle about the democracy, I think you would have heard me and other Ministers on many occasions assert the importance of our democratic principles, assert the importance of ensuring that we maintain the resilience of our democracy, including in the face of any suggestion of foreign interference, and we have laws to deal with that," Ms. Wong said in response to a question from the Australian media.

Australia and India are close strategic partners and both are members of the Quad formation along with Japan and the U.S.

That apart, Australia and India have also signed an ECTA – Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement, and are in talks for a comprehensive trade pact. The *Australian Broadcasting Corporation* earlier reported that Indian operatives were caught while they were trying to access "classified information on Australia's trade relationships", indicating the broad nature of the alleged Indian network that reportedly also surveilled upon members of the Indian diaspora. Despite growing ties, India in recent years has faced repeated difficulties with the Khalistan movement that caused irritants in New Delhi's relationship with Australia where the pro-Khalistan movement has held protests in major cities.

Last week, *ABC*'s India bureau chief Avani Dias said, she had to leave India "abruptly" indicating difficulties in getting a visa extension. Officials here, however, indicated later that she was given the required visa extension. Ms. Dias had informed *The Hindu* earlier that her in-depth research into the Khalistan issue which led her to the home of the slain pro-Khalistan ideologue Hardeep Singh Nijjar had drawn an aggressive response from the Indian officials.

U.S. expects accountability from India in Pannun case

Suhasini Haidar
WASHINGTON

The U.S. expects "accountability" and is raising concerns over the Pannun case with New Delhi regularly, the State department said, responding for the first time to the latest details reported by the *Washington Post* this week. The report named an Indian intelligence official for allegedly ordering the assassination of a Khalistani activist in New York in June 2023, and also claimed that U.S. authorities believe that the then R&AW chief and NSA Ajit Doval were aware of the plot.

"We continue to expect accountability from the Government of India based on the results of the Indian inquiry committee's work, and we are regularly working with them," State Department Principal Deputy Spokesperson Vedant Patel said, in response to a question about the *Post*'s article, where he did not deny its content.

No evidence that cipher was in Imran's custody: Pakistan court

Press Trust of India
ISLAMABAD

In a fresh twist in the cipher case, the Islamabad High Court observed that the Federal Investigation Agency has nothing to prove that jailed former Prime Minister Imran Khan retained the confidential diplomatic cable and it went missing from his possession.

An Islamabad High Court (IHC) Division Bench on Tuesday resumed hearing appeals filed by 71-year-old Mr. Khan and his then Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi against their conviction in the cipher case, questioned whether on not there was any record available to prove that the Mr. Khan retained the cipher.

Mr. Khan was sentenced to 10 years of imprisonment in the cipher case in which he showed a piece of paper – allegedly a copy of a diplomatic cipher – at a rally in Islamabad, claiming it as proof of a conspiracy against his government by a foreign power, referring to U.S. diplomat Donald Lu.

In a first, U.K. sends asylum seeker to Rwanda

Sriram Lakshman
LONDON

He took a flight from the U.K. to arrive in Kigali under a scheme that pays £3,000 to leave

In a first, a migrant whose asylum application was rejected by the United Kingdom was sent to Rwanda under a voluntary scheme, according to reports in the British press.

The unnamed man, who was relocated under a scheme that pays migrants £3,000 to leave, took a commercial flight out of the U.K. on Monday night and arrived in the Rwandan capital of Kigali, according to *The Sun*, which first reported the story.

U.K. Prime Minister Rishi Sunak had vowed to begin forcibly removing migrants with failed asylum claims to Rwanda starting in July in a bid to deter migrants from crossing the English Channel on boats to enter the U.K.

This is separate from the voluntary scheme that was announced in March and is a variant of an existing scheme where those without a right to remain in the U.K. are given financial assistance if they agree to leave the country.

The move was criticised by the Opposition. Yvette Cooper, Labour's Shadow Home Secretary, called it an "extortionate pre-election gimmick costing U.K. taxpayers".

As the U.K. heads towards an election, the Conservative government is keen to show that it is curbing migration to the U.K. Three major food delivery companies – Deliveroo, Just Eat and Uber Eats will begin checking substitute drivers' right to work documents.

A government Minister, on Tuesday, defended the deportation agreement with Rwanda, despite a Home Office impact assessment which said that only 2,143 of the 5,700 migrants who were identified for deportation could be located.

The individuals not reporting to the Home Office "will be located by law enforcement and be put on the planes as well", Health Secretary Victoria Atkins said in an interview.

Sport

Vinicius' brace earns Real a draw at Bayern

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Reuters
MUNICH

Saviour: Vinicius Jr. celebrates after netting Real's equaliser. AP

Real Madrid's Vinicius Jr. scored twice, including a late penalty, to snatch a 2-2 draw at Bayern Munich in an entertaining Champions League semifinal, first leg on Tuesday, leaving the tie wide open.

The Brazilian, who put Real in front after 24 minutes, has now scored in the semifinals for a third successive season.

Bayern had struck twice in four minutes early in the second half to turn the game around before Vinicius' spot kick.

Facing each other for a record eighth time at this stage of the competition, it was Bayern which got off to a strong start, racking up half a dozen attempts on goal by the 15th minute with Leroy Sane and Harry Kane coming close.

Real needed only one chance to score though, stunning the home crowd against the run of play when Kroos sliced open the Bayern defence with a through ball and Vinicius chased it down to beat goalkeeper Manuel Neuer.

Kroos almost added another himself in the 51st but his curled shot was palmed wide by Neuer.

Instead, it was Bayern which scored two minutes later with a solo effort and shot from Sane for a deserved equaliser.

Paying the penalty

The comeback was complete in the 57th when Jamal Musiala was brought down by Lucas Vazquez and Kane sent Andriy Lunin the wrong way to put the home side ahead.

Real, chasing a 15th European Cup, levelled in the 83rd with Vinicius' penalty to set up a mouth-watering return leg next week.

The result: Bayern Munich 2 (Sane 53, Kane 57-pen) drew with Real Madrid 2 (Vinicius Jr. 24, 83-pen).

Indonesia proves too good for India

THOMAS CUP

Press Trust of India
CHENGDU

Gritty show: Lakshya fought gallantly against Christie. X@BAI_MEDIA

Defending champion India lost to powerhouse Indonesia 1-4 and failed to top its group in the Thomas Cup badminton tournament here on Wednesday.

Both India and Indonesia have already qualified for the quarterfinals after winning their first two matches but the latter will progress to the knockouts as Group C topper.

Exacting revenge

The rematch of the 2022 Thomas Cup final provided Indonesia with a chance to exact revenge and it just did that on the back of a clinical display.

India number one in men's singles, H.S. Prannoy put the team ahead after he staged a remarkable comeback to get the better of Anthony Ginting 13-21, 21-12, 21-12 in the opening match.

In the first doubles match, Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty went down to Muhammad Shohibul Fikri and Bagas Maulana, the pair that dashed the Indians' hopes at the last All England Championship. Satwiksairaj and Chirag lost 22-24, 24-22, 21-19 as Indonesia levelled the tie at 1-1.

Lakshya Sen lost to reigning All England Championship winner Jonatan Christie 18-21, 21-16, 17-21. Though the 22-year-old Indian raised hopes when he claimed the second game with his impressive net play, but could not get past a determined Christie in the decider.

Easy wins

In the fourth match, India's Dhruv Kapila and Sai Pratheek lost 22-20, 21-11 to fancied Leo Rolly Carnando and Daniel Marthin.

In the final match, which was a dead rubber, K. Srikanth lost to Chico Aura Dwi Wardoyo. Srikanth won the opening game 21-19, but the next two 22-24, 14-21.

The results: Indonesia bt India 4-1 (Anthony Ginting lost to H.S. Prannoy 21-13, 12-21, 12-21; Shohibul Fikri & Bagas Maulana bt Satwiksairaj Rankireddy & Chirag Shetty 24-22, 22-24, 21-19; Jonatan Christie bt Lakshya Sen 21-18, 16-21, 21-17; Leo Rolly Carnando & Daniel Marthin bt Dhruv Kapila & Sai Pratheek 22-20, 21-11; Chico Aura Dwi Wardoyo by K. Srikanth 19-21, 24-22, 21-14).

NOT LOOKING GOOD

Deepak Chahar's injury a cause for concern, says Fleming

FILE PHOTO

CSK coach Stephen Fleming sounded bleak about Deepak Chahar's chances for the rest of the campaign after the pacer walked off the field without completing his first over. "He doesn't look good. The initial feeling wasn't great. I'm hoping for a more positive report after the physio and doctor have a look," said Fleming.

PENALISED

Hardik and other MI players fined for slow over rate against LSG

SANDEEP SAXENA

Mumbai Indians captain Hardik Pandya has been fined ₹24 lakh after his team's second slow over-rate offence in the IPL during their match against Lucknow Super Giants in Lucknow on Tuesday. All the other players were each individually fined either ₹6 lakh or 25% of their respective match fees, whichever is lesser.

BIG BOOST

Mayank Yadav all set to get BCCI's pace bowling contract

SANDEEP SAXENA

Pace sensation Mayank Yadav is all set to be given a pace bowling contract by the BCCI alongside Umran Malik, Vidwath Kaverappa, Vyshak Vijaykumar, Yash Dayal and Akash Deep. The contract will put Mayank under the supervision of NCA's Sports Science and Medical team which will take charge of his injury management.

COUNTRY FIRST

Buttler wanted England players to withdraw from IPL playoffs: Key

K. MURALI KUMAR

Captain Jos Butter pushed for withdrawal of English players from the IPL playoffs ahead of the T20 World Cup, the team's MD Rob Key said. "I asked him (Buttler), 'You're going to have this series against Pakistan. How do you see it?' He said, 'I want to come back, start getting ready for the World Cup in that series that's just before it'.

Punjab Kings continues to rule Chennai Super Kings

Spinners Harpreet Brar and Rahul Chahar put the skids on the Chennai side by picking up four wickets for just 33 runs in their eight overs; Ruturaj's half-century lone bright spot for the host

IPL-17

S. Dipak Ragav
CHENNAI

Punjab Kings spinners Harpreet Brar and Rahul Chahar's miserly spell during the middle overs set the foundation for their side's seven-wicket win over Chennai Super Kings at the MAC Stadium on Wednesday.

Opting to bowl first, PBKS restricted CSK to just 162 for seven as the spinners squeezed the runs dry without conceding a single boundary.

Chasing 163, cameos from Jonny Bairstow 46 (30b, 7x4, 1x6) and Rilee Rossouw (43, 23b, 5x4, 2x6) ensured PBKS got its fifth straight win over the five-time champion.

It was not an ideal start when CSK set out to defend the modest total, as Deepak Chahar limped off in pain on his run-up after two balls into the innings. Despite losing Prabhsimran Singh early, Bairstow and Rossouw quickly put the pressure back on the Super Kings bowlers as they added 64 for the second wicket. Rossouw straight drove and pulled Richard Gleeson before finding two more boundaries off Mustafizur Rahman in the next over.

The Chennai side's only chance to stage a fightback was with its spinners, especially in the absence of the in-form Matheesha Pathirana (niggle) and Tushar Deshpande (illness). But Bairstow smashed Ravindra Jadeja and Moeen Ali for four boundaries and a six. Though both missed their half-centuries, Sam Curran and Shashank Singh guided their side home without further trouble.

Earlier, Super Kings started strongly and got to 55 for no loss at the end of the PowerPlay.

But what followed was a phase of play that is unthinkable in modern-day T20 cricket, as the hosts failed to score a single boundary off the bat for 55 deliveries.

Brar (two for 17) and Rahul (one for 13) sent in seven overs during this phase on a two-paced pitch that offered some turn for the tweakers.

Left-arm spinner Brar struck twice in the eighth over, slowing it down to have Rahane caught in the deep and then trapped Shivam Dube leg-before.

If not for Ruturaj's grinding knock (62, 48b, 5x4, 2x6), CSK would not have reached the total it did. But with dew settling, it was never going to be enough.

Double blow: Dube was done in by a Harpreet Brar delivery for zero soon after the left-arm spinner had accounted for Rahane. S.R. RAGHUNATHAN & SPORTZPICS/IPL

SCOREBOARD

CHENNAI SUPER KINGS
Ajinkya Rahane c Rossouw b Harpreet Brar 29 *(24b, 5x4)*, Ruturaj Gaikwad b Arshdeep 62 *(48b, 5x4, 2x6)*, Shivam Dube lbw b Harpreet Brar 0 *(1b)*, Ravindra Jadeja lbw b Rahul Chahar 2 *(4b)*, Sameer Rizvi **(Impact Player in place of Rahane)** c Harshal b Rabada 21 *(23b, 1x4)*, Moeen Ali b Rahul Chahar 15 *(9b, 1x4, 1x6)*, M.S. Dhoni run out 14 *(11b, 1x4, 1x6)*, Daryl Mitchell (not out) 1 *(1b)*; Extras (lb-5, nb-1, w-12): 18; Total (for seven wkts. in 20 overs): 162.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-64 (Rahane, 8.2 overs), 2-65 (Dube, 8.3), 3-70 (Jadeja, 9.5), 4-107 (Rizvi, 15.3), 5-145 (Ruturaj, 17.5), 6-147 (Moeen, 18.4), 7-162 (Dhoni, 19.6).

KINGS BOWLING
Rabada 4-0-23-1, Arshdeep 4-0-52-1, Curran 3-0-37-0, Harpreet Brar 4-0-17-2, Rahul Chahar 4-0-16-2, Harshal 1-0-12-0.

PUNJAB KINGS
Prabhsimran Singh **(Impact Player in place of Arshdeep)** c Ruturaj b Gleeson 13 *(10b, 1x4, 1x6)*, Jonny Bairstow c Dhoni b Dube 46 *(30b, 7x4, 1x6)*, Rilee Rossouw b Shardul 43 *(23b, 5x4, 2x6)*, Shashank Singh (not out) 25 *(26b, 1x4, 1x6)*, Sam Curran (not out) 26 *(20b, 3x4)*; Extras (lb-1, nb-2, w-7): 10; Total (for three wkts. in 17.5 overs): 163.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-19 (Prabhsimran, 3.1), 2-83 (Bairstow, 9.2), 3-113 (Rossouw, 11.6).

SUPER KINGS BOWLING
Deepak Chahar 0.2-0-4-0, Shardul 3.4-0-48-1, Gleeson 3.5-0-30-1, Mustafizur 4-1-22-0, Jadeja 3-0-22-0, Moeen 2-0-22-0, Dube 1-0-14-1.

Toss: PBKS.
PoM: Harpreet Brar.
PBKS won by seven wickets with 13 deliveries remaining.

Next assignment

May 5: PBKS vs **CSK**
Dharamshala, 3.30 p.m.

Faltering Sunrisers face the high-flying Royals' test

Worried look: Klaasen, seen with Hetmyer, could be wondering about SRH's revival. B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

V.V. Subrahmanyam
HYDERABAD

Today's match

SUNRISERS vs. RAJASTHAN ROYALS

Hyderabad, 7.30 p.m.

HEAD-TO-HEAD
PLAYED: 18
SRH 9 | RR 9

PREVIOUS MEETING
SRH won by four wickets, 2023

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1 (SD & HD) & JIO CINEMA

Table-topper Rajasthan Royals takes on fifth-placed Sunrisers Hyderabad even as the home team desperately needs to regain the winning touch in the IPL league match at Rajiv Gandhi Stadium here on Thursday.

Royals batting line-up – comprising Yashasvi Jaiswal and Jos Buttler, No. 3 captain Sanju Samson, clean-hitting Riyan Parag, followed by Shimron Hetmyer and Dhruv Jorel – is one which can easily test the best of bowling attacks in any conditions.

The fact that Royals lost just one game from nine so far is testimony to the all-round skills of the team even as the fear of peaking too early might be lurking.

The variety in bowling with the likes of left-arm pacer Trent Boult, Nandre Burger, vasty-improving Avesh Khan with the new ball and the quality spin of R. Ashwin and Yuzvendra Chahal, backed by the ever-trying Sandeep Sharma, has been up to the challenge.

On the other hand, SRH, with five wins and four loses, needs to brush aside two consecutive losses which were primarily due to the failure of the big-hitting openers Travis Head and Abhishek Sharma.

Consequently, the others including the free-stroking South African duo of Aiden Markram and Heinrich Klaasen, and Nitish Reddy have also failed to come good. The team must address the issue immediately to be back in the reckoning.

Sunrisers' bowling has also been pretty inconsistent with the exception of left-arm pacers Jaydev Unadkat and death-overs specialist T. Natarajan.

Players have taken up the responsibility, says Sangakkara

Ready to strike: Buttler, who has made two hundreds this season, will be eyeing a big one against Sunrisers. B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

V.V. Subrahmanyam
HYDERABAD

Rajasthan Royals Director of Cricket Kumar Sangakkara felt that the players taking up the responsibility had been the key to the team's remarkable campaign so far.

Ahead of the game against Sunrisers Hyderabad, Sangakkara said the players had done the basics right. "It becomes very easy as a coaching group when the players take leadership and the responsibility... right from Sanju Samson as captain to everyone else, they had been very good at repeating the processes and being very disciplined. That's why we are in control after nine matches," he said.

"SRH is a great side. They've been playing very good cricket; so have we. Ultimately, in cricket, it's about skill versus skill. So everyone will have to be up for whatever is going to happen out there on Thursday," Sangakkara said.

Sunrisers assistant coach Simon Helmot said the side just needed to maintain its brand of aggressive cricket.

"Obviously we're searching for those extra partnerships that helped us in the early victories and continuously work on being as tight as we can with the ball. Hopefully, that can put us in a good spot against Rajasthan," said Helmot.

Lee not impressed with Mayank Yadav injury management by LSG

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Former Australia fast bowler Brett Lee feels Lucknow Super Giants did not manage Mayank Yadav's injury well, suggesting that the young tearaway pacer was brought back to IPL action prematurely after being sidelined due to abdominal soreness.

The 21-year-old Mayank developed abdominal soreness during LSG's match against Gujarat Titans on April 7. That was his third IPL game, and he impressed one and all with his express pace and two Player-of-the-Match awards.

He made a comeback in LSG's win against Mumbai Indians in Lucknow on Tuesday but walked off the field without completing his fourth over after an injury scare.

LSG coach Justin Langer said the young pace sensation is feeling "sore in the same spot" that kept him out of action for almost three weeks, while captain K.L. Rahul added that Mayank had complained of slight pain in his sides.

Lee, one of the game's most-feared fast bowlers, laid the blame on the LSG top management and medical staff. He said Mayank's initial injury would have required four to six weeks to heal, much more than the time period the youngster spent at the sidelines before being brought back.

"A side strain, or whatever they're calling it, normally takes at least four to six weeks to even come right. We don't know the depths of how big a strain it was but for somebody who is pushing the limits of his body by bowling 150 kmph, that's not good management at all," said Lee.

Not ideal: According to Lee, it takes at least four to six weeks to recover from a side strain like the one Mayank had. SANDEEP SAXENA

Points table

	M	W	L	PTS	NRR
Rajasthan Royals	9	8	1	16	0.694
Kolkata Knight Riders	9	6	3	12	1.096
Lucknow Super Giants	10	6	4	12	0.094
Chennai Super Kings	10	5	5	10	0.627
Sunrisers Hyderabad	9	5	4	10	0.075
Delhi Capitals	11	5	6	10	-0.442
Punjab Kings	10	4	6	8	-0.062
Gujarat Titans	10	4	6	8	-1.113
Mumbai Indians	10	3	7	6	-0.272
Royal Challengers	10	3	7	6	-0.415

INBRIEF

Lehecka knocks out Nadal, denies a milestone

Jiri Lehecka put an end to Rafael Nadal's run at the Madrid Open, on his final appearance at the Masters 1000 tournament. Lehecka defeated Nadal 7-5, 6-4 to advance to a last-eight meeting with Daniil Medvedev, and deny the five-time champion the chance to become the first man to reach 100 Masters 1000 quarterfinals.

Other result: Women: Quarterfinals: Rybakina bt Putintseva 4-6, 7-6(4), 7-5.

Red Bull confirms design chief Newey to leave F1 team

Red Bull confirmed on Wednesday that celebrated chief technical officer Adrian Newey will leave the F1 team in 2025 after 19 years. He is widely regarded as the greatest F1 designer and a chief architect of Red Bull's dominance.

Yashwardhan, Priyanshu, Aryan and Sahil advance

Aryan, Yashwardhan Singh, Priyanshu and Sahil all advanced into the youth semifinals of the ASBC Asian under-22 & youth boxing in Astana on Wednesday. On Tuesday night, Jugnoo (86kg), Tammana (50kg) and Preeti (54kg) made the girls' u-22 semi-finals and ensured medals.

LIVE TELECAST

Badminton: Thomas & Uber Cup, Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema, 7 a.m. & 2.30 p.m.
Bangladesh Women vs India Women: 3rd T20I, FanCode, 3.30 p.m.
IPL: Star Sports 1 (SD & HD) & JioCinema, 7.30 p.m.
Premier League: SS Select 1 & Hotstar, 12 a.m. (Friday).
Europa League: Sony LIV, 12.30 a.m. (Friday).
Tennis: Madrid Open, Sony Sports Ten 5 & LIV, 1.30 a.m. (Friday).

On a roll: India has done exceedingly well on all fronts in the preceding two matches. X@BCCIWOMEN

Upbeat India looks to seal the series

The visitors have relied on a collective effort and will seek more of the same in order to take a 3-0 lead in the five-match series

INDIA IN BANGLADESH

Press Trust of India
SYLHET

A dominant India will have sights set on an unassailable 3-0 lead in the five-match series when it takes on host Bangladesh in the third women's T20 International here on Thursday.

Having done exceedingly well to not just to turn up but trump its opponent on all fronts in the preceding two matches, India will enter the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium with the aim to follow the same script.

The bowling unit has been functioning cohesively, having restricted Bangladesh to modest totals with spinners Deepti Sharma, Radha Yadav, and Shreyanka Patil being economical.

In the pace department, Renuka Singh Thakur has starred with the ball in the opener while Pooja Vastrakar has also been handy.

Dayalan Hemalatha, making her return to international cricket after an absence of nearly 17 months, displayed her explosive batting during the powerplay in the last game, crafting an unbeaten 24-ball 41.

The likes of Shafali Verma, Yastika Bhatia, Harmanpreet Kaur, and Richa Ghosh have got runs under their belt.

However, star opener Smriti Mandhana will hope to find form.

India has relied on a collective team effort throughout this series and it will seek more of the same in the remaining games.

The host, on the other hand, will seek improvement in all three fronts.

Its batters have not been able to get big totals, while the bowlers haven't enjoyed good outings either, and the fielding has been found wanting.

The squads:
India: Smriti Mandhana, Dayalan Hemalatha, Harmanpreet Kaur (c), Deepti Sharma, S. Sajana, Shafali Verma, Shreyanka Patil, Amanjot Kaur, Pooja Vastrakar, Asha Sobhana, Yastika Bhatia (wk), Richa Ghosh, Radha Yadav, Renuka Singh Thakur, Titas Sadhu, Saika Ishaque.
Bangladesh: Murshida Khatun, Rubya Haider, Sobhana Mostary, Shorna Akter, Shorifa Khatun, Nigar Sultana (c&wk), Dilara Akter, Nahida Akter, Sultana Khatun, Ritu Moni, Rabeya Khan, Fahima Khatun, Marufa Akter, Fariha Trisna, Habiba Islam.
Match starts at 3.30 p.m. IST.

Smith, Fraser-McGurk miss the bus; Mitchell Marsh to lead Australia

T20 WORLD CUP

Reuters
MELBOURNE

Australia selectors dropped veteran campaigner Steve Smith for the T20 World Cup and ignored calls to include Jake Fraser-McGurk in the squad despite the young batsman's sensational form in the IPL.

Smith, a member of Australia's title-winning squad at the 2021 tournament in the UAE, played T20Is against New Zealand in February but was unable to push his claims further after missing out on an IPL contract.

Rashid to lead

Eight players featuring in the IPL have been named in the 15-member Afghanistan T20 World Cup squad to be led by star all-rounder Rashid Khan.

Meanwhile, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has delayed the announcement of the T20 World Cup squad until late May due to fitness and performance issues with some players.

The squads:
Australia: David Warner, Travis Head, Mitchell Marsh (capt.), Glenn Maxwell, Tim David, Marcus Stoinis, Matthew Wade, Mitchell Starc, Pat Cummins, Adam Zampa, Josh Hazlewood, Josh Inglis, Ashton Agar, Cameron Green, and Nathan Ellis.
Afghanistan: Rashid Khan (capt.), Rahmanullah Gurbaz (wk), Ibrahim Zadran, Azmatullah Omarzai, Najibullah Zadran, Mohammad Ishaq, Mohammad Nabi, Gulbadin Naib, Karim Janat, Nangyal Kharoti, Mujeeb Ur Rahman, Noor Ahmad, Naveen-ul-Haq, Fazalhaq Farooqi, Fareed Ahmad Malik.
Travelling reserves: Sediqullah Atal, Hazratullah Zazai, Mohammad Saleem Safi.

Bopanna-Ebden pair exits early in Madrid

Sports Bureau

Top seeds Rohan Bopanna and Matthew Ebden lost 7-6(4), 7-5 to Sebastian Korda and Jordan Thompson in the first round of the €9,249,713 ATP Masters tennis tournament in Madrid, Spain

Other results:

$82,000 Challenger, Guangzhou, China: Doubles (pre-quarterfinals): Ray Ho (Tpe) & Ramkumar Ramanathan bt Mattia Bellucci (Ita) & Moez Echargui (Tun) 6-3, 6-2.

BENGALURU ROUND-UP

Narrow win for TSCA (Hubli)

TSCA (Hubli) edged out School of Cricket by one wicket in the Tiger Cup under-14 tournament at Global Academy of Technology grounds.

The scores: School of Cricket 199/8 in 30 overs (Anirudh Rayasam 60, Sathwik 3/38) lost to TSCA (Hubli) 201/9 in 28.5 overs. Play Smart 230/9 in 30 overs (R. Pavandeep 59, Lithik Reddy 43, Gagan Yashpal 34, Narayan Singh 30, Aagneya 25, M. Revanth 3/47) bt RCA (Mysore) 123 in 22.5 overs.

Easy for East West

East West defeated Oriental FC 2-0 in a BDFA 'C' division football league match on Wednesday.

The results: East West FC 2 (Koushik Gowda 32, B. Gagan 39) bt Oriental FC 0; Bangalore Gorkha Boys FC 1 (Dhibi Joseph 41) bt Afghan FC 0.

Rashmi and Ghufran win Asian carrom crowns

Sports Bureau

Rashmi Kumari outplayed Shainy Sebastian 25-0, 25-4 to clinch the women's title in the 6th Asian carrom championship which concluded in Maldives on Wednesday. It was the fourth Asian crown for Rashmi.

In the men's final, Mohd. Ghufran beat reigning National champion K. Srinivas 25-17, 25-24.

The results:

Men: Final: Mohd. Ghufran bt K. Srinivas 25-17, 25-24; **semifinals:** Srinivas bt Jugal Kishor Dutta 25-8, 25-22; Ghufran bt Sandeep Dive 25-18, 25-10.

Women: Final: Rashmi Kumari bt Shainy Sebastian 25-0, 25-4; **semifinals:** Rashmi bt Aakanksha Kadam 25-10, 25-11; Shainy bt Nagajothi Kathavarayan 25-19, 20-25, 25-14.

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